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### Sermon Study on Luke 4, 38—44.

(For the Third Sunday after Epiphany.)

Practically every pericopal system has followed the custom established by the early comites of the Church, namely, that of devoting the Epiphany season to the contemplation of some of the outstanding miraculous acts of Christ whereby His deity is established. Thus we find the lesson of the twelve-year-old Christ-child in the Temple, of the first miracle at Cana, of the centurion of Capernaum, and of the stilling of the tempest among the pericopes of this season. By these acts, three of which occurred during the first year of Christ's Galilean ministry, the Lord opened the way for the proclamation of the Gospel. The miracles, in fact, were largely a means to an end, for they caused men to recognize in Christ a prophet, a teacher come from God. John 3, 2. This is also one of the objects in the lesson which we have before us.

The chronological position of the incidents here narrated is evident from the parallels in the other Synoptic gospels. Jesus had moved down to Capernaum after His first rejection in Nazareth, Luke 4, 16—30, but had very shortly afterward made a journey to Jerusalem, in March or April of the year 28 A. D., John 5, 1—47. After His return to Galilee, some time in May or early in June, He, first of all, made Capernaum His definite headquarters. Matt. 4, 13—16; Luke 4, 31. Not long afterwards He extended a specific call to Peter, Andrew, James, and John, whereby they were elevated from the rank of mere adherents or disciples to that of members of the inner circle of Christ, their number subsequently being increased to twelve and their official designation becoming that of apostles. Matt. 4, 18—22; Mark 1, 16—20; Luke 5, 1—11. The fact that Luke places the incidents of our text before the miraculous draught of fishes and the call of the four is in line with his statement that he intended to set forth the facts of the Gospel story *καθεξῆς*, that is, in an orderly manner, “in the uninterrupted series of a complex narrative” (Blass).

with the chronological order aimed at, though the logical order is found in instances where the literary plan and method of the book seemed to require it, as in this instance, where Luke evidently wanted to complete the account of the miraculous cures of Christ at this period of His public career.

*The Healing of Peter's Mother-in-Law.* — *But, having gotten up out of the synagogue, He went into the house of Simon. Now, the mother-in-law of Simon was firmly seized with a severe fever, and they asked Him concerning her. And having taken a position above her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; so, at once, having gotten up, she served them.* Vv. 38. 39. The incident just narrated, that of the healing of the demoniac, had taken place in the synagogue. Jesus, having been seated in the synagogue, as in chap. 4, 20, now arose to leave the building, the expression here being a breviloquence implying his leaving the synagogue at the close of the regular service of the Sabbath-day. Jesus went into the house of Simon, that is, of Peter. This is the first time that the name of Simon is mentioned in Luke's gospel, but no further description is required at this point, since the name and person of Peter were well known to all Christians of that time. Peter had originally lived in Bethsaida, on the other side of the Sea of Tiberias. John 1, 44. This had been about a year before. In the mean time he had moved over to Capernaum with his family. It is possible that Jesus boarded with the family of Peter at this time, as some commentators think, but the circumstances of the narrative rather oppose such a view.

The main point of the story is now introduced. Two facts are interesting in this connection, in the first place that Peter's mother-in-law was living with her children, and in the second place that she was very highly regarded in the household. They did not wait to let Christ find out about her sickness, but they informed Him of the fact. Mark 1, 30. The foolish unkindness which characterizes the behavior of many children in our days, according to which they despise the mother-in-law in the home, was not in evidence in the home of Simon. Luke uses the medical term of his time, for Galen, the Greek physician, divides fevers into such as were great and such as were slight. In this case it was a "great," or severe fever, and the aged woman was suffering with a bad and chronic attack (*συνεχουμένη* is the periphrastic passive or analytic imperfect). The idea of a minor feverish attack is excluded, for Luke takes pains to describe one of the worst forms of fever known in the Holy Land. The members of the family asked Him about her, they inquired concerning her, they wanted to know what they might do in her behalf or what He would do to bring her relief. We have here a fine example of loving intercession such as all Christians are bound to make for members of their own family and for others, as the case may demand.



Jesus lost no time in complying with the request. He stood over her, bending forward tenderly and with evident interest in her case, like a physician who is bound to do what he can in restoring his patient to health. But here was more than a mere earthly physician. He rebuked the fever, sharply bidding it begone, while, at the same time, he took her by the hand and lifted her up. Mark 1, 31. The effect was instantaneous. Immediately she was cured, immediately she was able to get up from her bed of sickness; the healing was perfect from that moment. And since, in that house, the rare and beautiful plant of gratitude was flourishing, the aged woman used the strength which had been given her by the Lord's miracle in making arrangements to serve the company, especially Jesus and the men who had come with Him, namely, Andrew, James, and John. Mark 1, 29.

*Cures on the Sabbath Evening.*—But, as the sun was setting, all whosoever had such as were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; but He, laying His hands on each one of them, healed them. There came out also demons out of many, screaming and saying, Thou art the Christ, the Son of God. And, rebuking, He would not permit them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ. Vv. 40, 41. As a matter of custom, if not of conviction, the people of Galilee were careful to observe the rest of the Sabbath-day. But with sunset the Sabbath closed, and therefore the Sabbath commands were no longer binding. As many of the people, therefore, as had sick relatives and friends (εἶχον, Impf., distributive and descriptive), began to lead and to carry them to Jesus. They came from all sides and in a continuous stream (ῥῆγαν, Effect. Aor. Act.). Their action showed a definite trust in Jesus and His power. The miracle of the morning had convinced them that they had a powerful Healer in their midst, and they were only too willing to take advantage of that opportunity. Luke's account brings out and emphasizes the benevolent sympathy of Jesus for the individual sufferer. He either had the sick brought to Him, one by one, or He went from one to the other, laid His hands on them, and healed them. Many manuscripts have ἐθεράπευεν instead of ἐθεράπευσεν, the imperfect indicating the constant repetition of the act of healing. What object the Lord had in mind in permitting Himself to be imposed upon with this wholesale healing is shown in Matt. 8, 17, with reference to the present occasion. The one greatest disease which the Lord has taken upon Himself and borne is sin; all sickness, all evil, is the result or consequence of sin. When Jesus, therefore, laid hands on any sick person, it implied: Thou art a sinner, I am the Savior of sinners; I take the curse and consequence of sin from thee, let this be an admonition to thee to abstain from the service of sin.

The evangelist further states that, while Jesus was performing these miracles of healing in general, He did not neglect some specific

forms of a very severe malady. It seems that the very presence of Jesus upon this occasion exerted a powerful influence. Among the unfortunate people who had been brought by their friends and relatives were also such as were possessed with demons. These demons, however, could not keep their hold on their victims, with Jesus at hand. In addition to what is told of other healings we are here informed that the demons came out of many. Before Jesus had so much as said one word, they released the victims whom they had plagued, at the same time screaming their declaration of the fact that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah, the Son of God. The devil is by no means ignorant of the person and of the work of Christ. Cp. Jas. 2, 19. But a confession of Christ in the mouth of one of the evil spirits is an insult to the Holy One of God. Therefore Jesus rebuked these demons, as they spoke through the mouths of their victims. He continued to voice His refusal that they make known Him and His work (*εἰς*, Impf. of *εἶπω*). Though they knew, though they were fully aware that He was the Christ, as promised by prophetic word, they had no right to make their information known. Their knowledge caused Jesus to hinder them in their unsolicited confession. The fact that Christ is the Anointed One of God has significance only for such as are included in the atonement brought about by His threefold office, and the confession of evil spirits, who are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day, Jude 6, does not have the force of a message of the Gospel-truth. Jesus wants no praise from the devil nor from any of those who have placed themselves in the service of the devil.

*The Withdrawal of Jesus.* — *But when day was coming on, He, going out, made His way to a desert [lonely] place, and the multitudes kept searching for Him, and they came to Him, and they tried to keep Him from going away from them. But He said to them, To the other cities also I must bring the good news of the kingdom of God; for to this end was I sent. And He was engaged in preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.* Vv. 42—44. The very next morning after the many miraculous healings, at the very break of day, Jesus left Capernaum. Cp. Mark 1, 35. It was not that He was fleeing from the multitudes, but that He felt the need of retiring to some lonely or solitary place, in an uncultivated spot, away from the haunts of men. As at other times, His object was to be undisturbed in prayer. His departure was noticed first by Peter and his companions, and the other people took their cue from the movements of the disciples. The multitudes organized a formal search for Jesus (*ἐπεζήτουν* in many uncials instead of the simplex *ἐζήτουν*). They were most anxious to find Him. Although their motive was not pure, their eagerness to find the Savior may well serve as an example to Christians of our day. At the same time, we might learn from the example of Jesus to withdraw occa-



sionally from the bustle and hurry of modern business and to devote some time to prayer and to prayerful meditation. We are too liable to lose our balance and our sense of proportion according to Biblical standards if there is only the ceaseless hurry of work, alternating with rounds of pleasure. Sunday particularly should be the day set apart for quiet communion with God, not spent in contempt of the Word of God and in loud and boisterous picnics, but in prayerful contemplation of the one thing needful.

When the people came to the place where Jesus was, they tried to hold Him lest He leave them. They do not seem to have had the right spirit even now, their chief interest being in keeping Jesus in their midst on account of the sick who were as yet not healed. But Jesus would not permit Himself to be so detained. His mission was not primarily the alleviating of bodily suffering, for the miracles performed in this connection were only a means to an end. He told the multitudes that His mission required Him to preach the kingdom of God also to other cities. Cp. John 5, 36; 6, 57; 7, 29. Preaching the kingdom of God, with Jesus, meant making known the Gospel of salvation, for those who accept Jesus as the Savior of the world, as their personal Redeemer, are citizens in this Kingdom and are entitled to its rights and privileges. In the real sense of the term, the expression Kingdom embraces only the true believers, although the Bible sometimes speaks of the Kingdom as it appears before the eyes of men. In agreement with His declaration Christ started on a preaching tour, He was engaged in preaching in the synagogues of Galilee. Since a community of ten householders sufficed for the establishment of a synagogue, there was practically no town of any size in this entire section of the Holy Land without its synagogue. In this manner Jesus was enabled to bring the message of salvation to a great many souls. That is the real object of Christ's coming, to "gospel" the kingdom of God, to preach the good news of salvation. It was an obligation of love which rested upon Him. He had taken this work upon Himself; in this work He wanted to show all faithfulness. In this respect the Lord is a shining example, not only to pastors and all such as are engaged in proclaiming the Gospel publicly by virtue of a special call, but to all Christians everywhere.

*Suggestions for Sermon Outlines.* — If one wishes to use the entire passage, the following outlines may serve. Jesus the Healer and the Teacher: 1. His healing as a preparation for His teaching; 2. His teaching as a sequel to His healing. — The Merciful Kindness of Christ: 1. In His compassion upon the sick; 2. In His preaching of salvation. — If only certain sections of the text are to be employed, the following outlines are suggested. Christ the One True Savior: 1. He heals sickness; 2. He conquers the spirits of darkness; 3. He preaches the Kingdom of God. — Christ as the Almighty Son of God:

1. In His miracles of healing; 2. In His unlimited power over the spirits of darkness; 3. In carrying out His mission. — Christ an Example to Us: 1. In His compassion for those in need; 2. In His life of prayer; 3. In making known the facts of salvation. K.

## Amtsjubiläumspredigt über Jer. 3, 15.

Dem eigenen Vater zum goldenen Amtsjubiläum gehalten von H. W. B.

Wir haben uns hier mit großer Freude zu einem Jubiläumsgottesdienst versammelt. Jubel, Freude, Lob und Dank erfüllt unsere Herzen. Dieser Tag steht nämlich in engster Verbindung mit einem andern Tage anfangs August 1875, heute vor fünfzig Jahren. Damals hatte ein kleines Gemeindlein, das aus armen Leuten bestand, hier an der oft bodenlosen Morganford Road ein kleines Holzgebäude, das als Kirche und Schule diente. Vor diesem Gebäude stand ein armseliges Haus, das aus zwei Zimmern und zwei niedrigen Dachstuben bestand und als Pfarrwohnung diente. Heute ist die St. Johannisgemeinde an Gliederzahl zu einer großen Gemeinde gewachsen. Neue Gebäude zieren diese Gegend. Diese irdische Wohlthat Gottes soll heute mit Jubel und Dank gegen Gott anerkannt werden.

Diese kleine Gemeinde berief vor fünfzig Jahren einen Kandidaten der Theologie, der gerade sein Examen bestanden hatte, zu ihrem Seelsorger, der in Kirche und Schule tätig sein sollte. Seit fünfzig Jahren hat der gnädige Gott über diesen Hirten seine schützende und leitende Hand gehalten und ihm seltene Gesundheit und Geistesfrische verliehen, so daß fast nie ein Gottesdienst ausgesetzt werden mußte wegen Krankheit des Pastors. Auch diese leibliche Gabe Gottes ist die Ursache unsers heutigen Jubels.

Doch hat unsere heutige Feier einen noch tieferen Grund, der uns zum rechten Dank antreiben und in die rechte Feststimmung versetzen soll. Dieser Grund ist in unserm Text enthalten.

### Unser Jubel bei der fünfzigjährigen Amtsfeier unsers Vaters und Pastors.

1. Der Grund unsers Jubels.
2. Die Gesinnung, in welcher sich unser Jubel kundgeben soll.

#### 1.

„Ich will euch Hirten geben nach meinem Herzen“, so spricht der Herr in unserm Text, der Herr, von dem der Psalmist freudig ausruft: „Der Herr ist mein Hirte.“ „Er wird seine Herde weiden wie ein Hirte; er wird die Lämmer in seine Arme sammeln und in seinem Busen tragen und die Schafmütter führen. Denn so spricht der Herr: Siehe, ich will mich meiner Herde selbst annehmen und sie suchen, wie ein Hirte seine Schafe suchet, wenn sie von seiner Herde



verirret sind.“ Es ist unser Heiland Jesus Christus, der hier redet, derselbe, der uns versichert: „Ich bin ein guter Hirte; ein guter Hirte läßt sein Leben für die Schafe.“ Dieser Hirte und Bischof unserer Seelen hat sich mit seinem Blute eine Herde erworben und gewonnen. Der große Hirte, den der Gott des Friedens von den Toten ausgeführt hat, sammelt auch hier in der St. Johanniskirche seine erlösten Schafe, bringt sie zur grünen Weide und führt sie, wenn der Abend kommt, ein in die Hürden des ewigen Friedens. Das ist das selige Werk unsers Herrn.

Der Herr bedient sich jedoch zu diesem herrlichen Werke seiner Unterhirten. Er beruft sie und sendet sie seinen Gemeinden. Das hat er vor fünfzig Jahren an dieser Gemeinde getan. Seine Verheißung war: „Ich will euch Hirten geben nach meinem Herzen.“ Daß der Herr hier an diesem Orte euch, geliebte Festgenossen, einen Hirten gegeben hat nach seinem Herzen und ihn bis zu dieser Stunde, fünfzig Jahre lang, im Werk der Seelenrettung hat wirken lassen, ist eine große, unverdiente Gnade. Bedenkt, er hat euch diesen Hirten gegeben. Daß euch diese Gabe, dies Geschenk Gottes, ein halbes Jahrhundert zu eurem Seelenheil, zum Wohl der ganzen Gemeinde, erhalten worden ist, soll euch Glieder dieser Gemeinde doch sicherlich in eine dankbare Gesinnung versetzen und zu hellem Jubel anregen.

Die Tatsache jedoch, daß der treue Oberhirte von dir, lieber Vater, sagt: „Ich will euch einen Hirten geben nach meinem Herzen“, ist doch sicherlich Grund auch deines Jubels. Diese Gemeinde wollte der Herr groß machen. Hier wollte er sein Werk treiben: Seelen bekehren, erbauen, retten, selig machen. Aus Tausenden hat der Herr dich dazu ausersehen und berufen. Damals ist dir, wie einst Petro, dein Heiland begegnet und hat dich liebevoll gefragt: „Liebst du mich?“ Das war deine Herzensgesinnung; darum lautete auch deine Antwort: „Ja, Herr, du weißest, daß ich dich liebe.“ Jesus vertraute dir dann diese Gemeinde an mit dem Bescheid: „Weide meine Schafe, weide meine Lämmer!“ Der Heiland hat dich so in diese Gemeinde geführt mit der Rekommandation: „Ich will euch einen Hirten geben nach meinem Herzen.“ Das bist du diese ganzen Jahre gewesen, im Sommer und Winter, zur Fasten- und Festzeit, Tag und Nacht. Ein Hirte zu sein nach Gottes Herzen, ist eine höhere Ehre, als eine Krone haben, ein Königtum besitzen. Schon dieser kurze Hinweis auf das herrliche Werk, das Gottes Gnade hier ausrichtet, gibt Pastor und Gemeinde sowie uns allen Grund und Ursache, fröhliche Dank- und Jubellieder zu singen.

Doch wann sind Prediger wirklich Hirten nach dem Herzen Gottes? Es gibt ja viele Pastoren, die nicht nach dem Herzen Gottes sind. Sie mögen einen Beruf aufweisen können. Auch mögen sie glänzende Kanzelredner sein. Die tägliche Presse nimmt vielleicht oft Notiz von ihnen. Viele haben sogar herrliche Geistesgaben, manchmal auch wirk-

lich weltliche Gelehrsamkeit. Sie wachsen im Garten Gottes wie buntfarbige Blumen, schön und bewundernswert dem äußeren Aussehen nach, aber sie verpesteten die Luft. über solche klagt der Oberhirte: „Die Gelehrten achten mein nicht, und die Hirten führen die Leute von mir.“ „Die Propheten weissagen falsch in meinem Namen; ich habe sie nicht gesandt und ihnen nichts befohlen und nichts mit ihnen geredet; sie predigen euch falsche Gesichte, Deutung, Abgötterei und ihres Herzens Trügerei. Darum spricht der Herr von den Hirten, die mein Volk weiden: Ihr habt meine Herde zerstreuet und vertrieben.“ „Wehe euch Hirten, die ihr die Herde einer Weide umbringet und zerstreuet! spricht der Herr.“ Solche Prediger sind ein Fluch für die Kirche.

Nur dann sind Prediger wirklich Hirten nach dem Herzen Gottes, wenn sie die reine Lehre, die himmlische Weisheit des Wortes Gottes, predigen. Unser Text beschreibt sie als solche: „die euch weiden sollen mit Lehre und Weisheit“. Ihr Glieder dieser Gemeinde habt einen Hirten, der euch so geweidet hat. Er ist euch allen mit einem recht christlichen und frommen Wandel vorangegangen. Leider ist das Himmelreich heute vielerorts gleich einer Aue, die verdorrt ist, einem Boden, der steinicht geworden ist, einer wasser- und graslosen Wüste, wo die Schafe und Lämmer verschmachten. Ihr dagegen seid nicht mit Stroh und Stoppeln abgefüttert worden. Ihr werdet auf eine grüne, frische, kräftige Weide geführt. Ihr hattet immer in Hülle das kernige Brot des Lebens, das reine Wort Gottes und das seelenerquickende Wasser, die heiligen Sakramente, wie sie uns aus Christi Hand gegeben sind. Wahrlich, ihr habt im Lande Gosen gelebt. Euch hat der gnädige Herr einen Hirten gegeben, der euch geweidet hat mit Lehre und Weisheit.

Daß Gott dich, lieber Jubilar, gewürdigt hat, während deiner langen Amtszeit die heilsame Lehre, die göttliche Weisheit, zu verkündigen, ist heute auch dein Ruhm. Bei deiner Ordination vor fünfzig Jahren hat dich Gott in das heilige Amt geführt, wie einst seinen Propheten Jeremias, mit den Worten: „Du sollst gehen, wohin ich dich sende, und predigen, was ich dich heiße. Siehe, ich lege meine Worte in deinen Mund.“ So frohlockst du denn mit Paulus: „Welcher [Gemeinde] ich ein Diener worden bin nach dem göttlichen Predigtamt, das mir gegeben ist unter euch, daß ich das Wort Gottes reichlich predigen soll, nämlich das Geheimnis, das verborgen gewesen ist von der Welt her und von den Zeiten her, nun aber offenbaret ist seinen Heiligen.“ Du bist ein Hirte nach dem Herzen Gottes, da dich Gott in seiner Gnade erhalten hat, die Bibel als Gottes lauterer Wort und göttliche Weisheit sowohl selbst zu glauben als auch andere zu lehren.

Wahrlich, wenn ihr, Prediger und Gemeinde, die ihr so fest und innig in der Liebe zusammengewachsen seid wie eine geistliche Familie, an den Segen denkt, den Gott euch durch diese zarten Bande darreicht, dann werdet ihr Grund und Ursache haben zu dieser heutigen Jubiläumsfeier.



## 2.

Doch, in welcher Gesinnung soll sich unser Jubel kundgeben?

Unser aller Motto ist: „Gott allein die Ehre!“ Wenn wir Prediger auf uns selbst sehen, auf unsere eigene Heiligkeit und Fähigkeit, dann müssen wir bekennen, daß wir des hohen Amtes, das uns anbefohlen ist, nicht nur unwürdig, sondern zur rechten Verwaltung desselben auch untüchtig sind. Wir haben unser altes Fleisch an uns, das immer den Irrweg will, das immer lässig und träge ist und gerne „Friedel“ sagt, wo kein Friede ist. Aber dein Herr hat auch dich rein gewaschen mit seinem Hirtenblut, hat dir das rechte Hirtengewand seiner Gerechtigkeit angelegt und dich so würdig erklärt, sein Diener zu sein. Du hast oft erkannt, daß dein Amt von dir erforderte, den Teufel zu bezwingen, die Welt zu erobern, aus Toten Lebendige und aus Feinden Gottes Freunde zu machen. Wir müssen oft verzagt ausrufen: „Wer ist hiezu tüchtig?“ Gott aber, der uns berufen hat, hat uns mit seinen Gaben ausgerüstet, uns seine Gnadenmittel geschenkt und diesen Mitteln seine göttliche Kraft verliehen, daß sie Wunder seiner Gnade nach seinem Wohlgefallen verrichten. So bekennen wir dann wieder getrost: „Ein solch Vertrauen haben wir durch Christum zu Gott. Nicht daß wir tüchtig sind von uns selber, etwas zu denken als von uns selber, sondern daß wir tüchtig sind, ist von Gott, welcher auch uns tüchtig gemacht hat, das Amt zu führen des Neuen Testaments.“ Wir sind nur Gottes Werkzeuge. Das ist heute die Gesinnung deines Herzens. Ihm allein die Ehre!

Nun eilst du einem schönen Lebensabend entgegen. Die Schatten werden immer länger. Begehe daher deinen Ehrentag vertrauensvoll mit der gewissen und fröhlichen Hoffnung, daß der Hirte, der dir fünfzig Jahre lang so getreu zur Seite gestanden hat, auch bis ans Ende dich nicht verlassen noch versäumen wird. Er ist auch im dunklen Tale bei dir. Sein Stecken und Stab trösten dich. Will dein Herr dich noch ferner gebrauchen und erhalten? Gut! Sollte dies dein letzter Tag im Amte, auf Erden sein, dann würdest du doch in dankbarer Gesinnung dein goldenes Jubiläum mit Freuden begehen. Fünfzig Jahre im Dienste des Herrn gestanden zu haben an einer und derselben Gemeinde, welch seltene Auszeichnung! Möge der Gott aller Hoffnung dir diese dankbare und fröhliche Gesinnung bis an dein seliges Ende verleihen und dann — die ewige Jubelfeier!

Doch in welcher Gesinnung begeht ihr Glieder der St. Johannis-gemeinde diese Jubelfeier?

Gott erfordert heute von euch Anerkennung, dankbare Herzen. Denkt an die Tausende von Tausen, die Gott durch euren Seelsorger hat verrichten lassen. Jetzt werden hier Kinder Gottes durch das Bad der Wiedergeburt dem Reiche Gottes zugeführt, deren Großeltern von eurem Pastor getauft worden sind. Denkt an die vielen Konfirmandenstunden! Wie oft ist hier das heilige Abendmahl ausgeteilt, wie viele

Ehepaare christlich eingeseget worden! Wie viele Seelen hat nicht euer lieber Pastor auf eine selige Heimfahrt vorbereitet! Begeht deshalb diese Jubelfeier als ein Dankfest. So singt heute eure Pieder, so spricht heute eure Gebete.

Doch Gott will, daß ihr heute diese Amtsfeier auch mit dem Vorsatz begeht, nicht bloß Hörer, sondern auch Täter des Worts zu sein. Laßt euch mit aufrichtigen Herzen weiden und führen! Werdet nicht satt und der Weide überdrüssig! Bleibet bei der heilsamen Lehre und bei der himmlischen Weisheit, die euch unterweisen kann zur Seligkeit durch den Glauben an unsern Herrn Jesum Christum! „Gehorchet euren Lehrern und folget ihnen; denn sie wachen über eure Seelen, als die da Rechenschaft dafür geben sollen, auf daß sie das mit Freuden tun und nicht mit Seufzen; denn das ist euch nicht gut.“ Ja, „gedenket an eure Lehrer, die euch das Wort Gottes gesagt haben; welcher Ende schauet an und folget ihrem Glauben nach!“

Es ist auch recht und billig, daß ihr diese Feier veranstaltet habt. Ihr begeht diesen Tag ja in Anerkennung der Dienste die euch euer Seelsorger erwiesen hat. Wenn Gott uns Hirten gibt, dann sollen wir sie als Gottes Geschenk dankbar annehmen und als Gottes Boten ehrfurchtsvoll anerkennen eingedenk der Worte des Apostels: „Die Ältesten, die wohl vorstehen, die halte man zwiefacher Ehre wert, sonderlich die da arbeiten im Wort und in der Lehre.“ Sollte eures Pastors Geistesfrische nachlassen und schließlich seine Kräfte gänzlich schwinden, so denkt zurück mit kindlicher Dankbarkeit an die fünfzig Jahre treuer Dienstleistung.

Sicherlich, wenn wir so mit demütigen und dankbaren Herzen der unermesslichen Wohlthaten Gottes gedenken, die diese Feier in Erinnerung bringen soll, dann hat unser heutiger Jubel den rechten Grund, und unsere Feier geschieht in der rechten Gesinnung. So laßt uns alle, Pastor und Gemeinde, jung und alt, uns als vor dem Throne unsers Gottes versammeln und den großen, gnädigen Gott loben und preisen, den Gott, der uns seinen eingebornen Sohn geschenkt hat, den großen Hirten, der sein Leben für uns gelassen hat und der uns nun bis an den jüngsten Tag Hirten sendet nach seinem Herzen, die uns weiden mit Lehre und Weisheit, und der uns mit seinem Heiligen Geiste begnadet, daß er uns zu Schafen seiner Herde macht. Ja, dem dreieinigen Gott allein sei Lob und Ehre, Preis und Anbetung! Amen.

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### Sermon on Ex. 17, 8—13.

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It has become a fixed usage and custom with us to set aside a Sunday somewhere near the beginning of the year to discuss the prospects of our congregation for the coming year, to arrive at a fixation of our responsibilities and opportunities, and to encourage



one another to do our part, gladly and courageously, that the work of the Church may prosper. At these occasions we want to set our eyes to the front, and with a clear understanding of what the work of the Church is we want to see what will be necessary in order that this work can be done and how best we can meet the obligations and measure up to the opportunities presented to us.

According to Christ's instructions the Church has just one thing to do, namely, to preach the Gospel. And that is the work before us this year: to preach the Gospel as clearly, earnestly, and faithfully as possible and to as many people as we can reach by the most determined and persistent efforts we can put forth. However, a great many things must work together, and a number of forces must be coordinated if this preaching of the Gospel is to go forward as it should and is to be carried on as effectively and efficiently as one might wish. And there it is necessary for each individual Christian, for every one of you, my friends, to realize just what his share of the work is, and to be willing to do what he can in the great, all-important soul-saving work of the Church. Only when we have all seen our opportunities and have all understood our responsibilities and are all willing to shoulder them and to work together for the advancement of the Kingdom, will the work move forward as it should and prosper as we desire.

To do the great work of preaching the Gospel, of feeding the lambs and the sheep of Jesus, as it is formulated in the commission to Peter, the congregations call ministers and teachers, as you have done here, and these attend to that work to the best of their ability and to the utmost of their strength. But that does not relieve the rest of the Christians of their responsibility; they also must do their part, take care of their share of the work. And if they fail in this, if they do not do their part of the work, do not realize their responsibility, and do not cooperate and work together with the servants of the Word whom they have called and with the other Christians, the work must suffer and to a large extent will be barren of results. — All this we can see from the story of our text. Let us, then, consider, under the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit: —

### *HOLDING UP THE ARMS OF MOSES.*

We shall see,

1. *Why that is necessary;*
2. *How it may be done.*

#### 1.

Our text takes us back to the time when Israel was journeying through the wilderness, on its way to the Promised Land. With His mighty arm the Lord had delivered the people out of Egypt; He had given them Moses for a leader; and now their feet were set toward the Land of Promise. But there were many hardships to be borne

and many difficulties to be overcome before they would enter into possession and enjoyment of the Promised Land. Hardly had they been delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians when other enemies rose up to strive against them. Thus we read in our text of Amalek, the first of the heathen nations to attack Israel, which raised the sword against God's people and disputed their march across the desert toward Canaan.

So here a battle scene is enrolled before our eyes. There are the hosts of Israel under Joshua and their other mighty leaders and captains, the tribe of Judah in the van, engaged in battle with Amalek, and the tide of battle is sweeping to and fro. And upon a hill stood Moses, the venerable patriarch, the prophet and leader of the people. And with him were Aaron and Hur. But what was Moses doing on the hill? Was he merely an idle spectator? Or had he perhaps sought the hilltop that he might be safe from the clash of arms, the singing, swift-winged arrow, the whistling spear, the sharp edge of the sword? Or had he sought the hilltop that he might be in a position to flee at once if the balance of battle should turn against Israel? Oh, not at all! Moses was supporting the hosts of Israel in a very effective way, in a manner that was highly important for the success of the arms of Israel in their battle against Amalek.

What was Moses doing? He was raising up his arms in prayer to the Lord of hosts; he was imploring the Lord to help His people Israel. Can you see him standing there on the hilltop, that venerable figure, bent with the cares and worries of an entire nation, his white patriarchal beard flowing in the wind, his eyes raised up to heaven, his lips moving in fervent prayer, his arms raised up in urgent supplication? That was the gesture of prayer with the Israelites; they raised up their arms to heaven when praying. We fold our hands when we pray, lest our attention be turned aside; but the Jews in the Old Testament were wont to hold up their hands, with arms spread out wide, in a gesture of supplication. So Moses stood that day, with his arms stretched out, imploring God for help. And while he held out his arms in prayer and supplication, Israel prevailed, the text says, that is, Israel put Amalek to flight. It is always thus: God is willing to help, to bless, but He wants us to ask, to pray, to petition Him for the blessing and help He is so willing to give.

Thus, while Moses held up his arms in prayer, Israel prevailed, Israel was winning the battle. But soon the arms of Moses grew tired, heavy, and sank down, and that had a disastrous result. As soon as Moses' arms were dropped, Amalek prevailed, and Israel was losing, was being driven back before the sharp swords of Amalek. Moses saw this, and he raised up his arms again, and once more Israel



prevailed. But it was not humanly possible for him to hold out his arms indefinitely, so soon he had to drop them again, and once more the tide of battle turned against Israel, and Amalek prevailed.

What was to be done? Here Aaron and Hur stepped up and overcame the difficulty. Moses was permitted to sit down upon a rock, and now Aaron and Hur upheld his arms, so that he could continue in prayer and supplication, and thus Israel prevailed, and Amalek was discomfited and was thoroughly vanquished and defeated.

Now, the point I want you to note particularly is this: Aaron and Hur had to help Moses; they had to support his arms and hold them up, otherwise he could not have carried out his work, could not have kept on in prayer and supplication, and then Israel would not have prevailed, but would have been defeated by Amalek. So you see that the work of Aaron and Hur, though it may not have looked like a great accomplishment, was very necessary for the success of Israel in its struggle against Amalek.

Now, my friends, we have a situation very much similar to this in our church-work. Here, too, we have a tremendous work to perform, and many difficulties are to be overcome. God has given His Church certain leaders, who are to be particularly active in the work God has given the Church to do, above all, to attend to the preaching of the Word—the ministers, the undershepherds, the pastors of the flock; and with them we group the teachers, who are assisting them—especially by feeding the lambs of Christ. Now, then, these leaders are doing their best, they are striving to the utmost, they are giving unstintingly of their life and strength; and that is as it should be. But just as the arms of Moses grew heavy and dropped down, and just as it was necessary for Aaron and Hur to uphold and support his arms that Israel might prevail, just so it is with us. Our arms grow heavy, they simply must drop, and the work is bound to suffer if no one comes to support our arms. Some one must come and uphold our arms, otherwise they will drop, and the enemy will prevail. But if friends step up and hold up our arms, then the work will flourish, and the Lord will grant us victory, and the cause of the Church will prosper. Have I made it clear, my friends, that we must have cooperation, that we must have help, that some one must hold up our arms, because otherwise the work of the Church must lag, must suffer? Do you clearly see that some one must hold up our arms?

## 2.

Well, then, who is to do that, and how can it be done? The first question we can dispose of very quickly: Every Christian should help, every single member of the Church, every one that has come to a knowledge of his Savior, who has and experiences the blessings of

the Word, is being fed with the Gospel, is enjoying the ministrations of the Church,—every one of them should help. That includes you, my friend. There is none too old, or too young, or too weak, or too poor; every one has something to do and therefore should feel personally responsible for the work of the Church. Every one can do something to uphold the arms of his leaders. We have been striving for this very thing in our congregation, that every one should take hold and do something. It is in agreement with this idea that the congregation—to mention just one instance—expects every communicant to contribute, even if it be but small sums that some of them can give; but every one should do something.

But what can I do? you ask. How can I support the arms of my pastor? My friend, I hope you are asking that question in all seriousness. It is a tremendous work; it involves the most holy things we have here on earth; it revolves about the most important questions that can come up in life; it has to do with the saving of immortal souls, which were bought with the precious blood of Jesus; it is a matter that is very close to the heart of God, in which He is intensely interested. This work, given to the Church, is to be regarded by her as its most sacred commission and most holy obligation, a work that is bound upon the conscience of every Christian by the last word and command of Jesus. O my friend, if I could but make you see how urgently necessary it is that you, every one of you, uphold the arms of the pastor! If I could make you feel that you are responsible, each one of you personally and individually, for the success of the Church, that, if *you* uphold the arms of your pastor, the work will prevail and go forward, and if *you* do *not* uphold the arms of your ministers, the work will lag and bog down; if you could be fired with holy zeal and be set ablaze with whole-souled devotion; if your heart were throbbing with love, and you were eager for service, glowing with determination and borne up by courage; if we could all work together with unselfish loyalty and self-denying consecration,—oh, what wonderful things could be accomplished under the blessing of the Lord! Oh, that you would ask in all seriousness: What can I do to uphold the arms of my leaders in this immensely important and distressingly difficult and inexpressibly blessed work?

And what can you do? Pray. Moses prayed that the Lord might give success to the arms of Israel, and Israel prevailed. And Aaron and Hur helped him pray. So I would ask you likewise: Pray! Pray diligently and fervently. Pray that the Lord would grant success to the preaching of His Word, that He would give power and courage and wisdom to your pastor, that the people will flock to church, that they will hear the Word with a believing heart. Just your prayers are so very necessary for the success of the work.



It means so much to your pastor to know: with me are all the prayers of my flock, behind me are all the Christians, arrayed, as it were, in serried ranks, sending up their prayers to the Throne of Grace for success to the Word. Your prayers are needed there, dear friend. Go, then, uphold the arms of your pastor, make yourself responsible for the success of the Church, and meet that responsibility with your diligent, fervent, devout, and daily prayer.

And then I would like to plead with you to throw your personal influence into the balance, with your personal influence to support your church and pastor. Show it, and also say it, that you are personally interested. Then lend your personal interest to the cause of winning others and of holding the interest of others, of keeping alive the enthusiasm of the other members, and of building up a fine spirit of cooperation and fellowship within the congregation. You personally must feel responsible for that and then try to meet that responsibility.

And if you want to hold up the arms of your pastor, make yourself responsible for the success of each service held in this church. Make yourself responsible for the attendance; be at the services yourself and see that others are there. Make yourself responsible for the singing, for the worshipful attitude, and for everything else that tends to make the service a success. Also take the trouble to greet the stranger and try to make him feel welcome.

And to uphold the arms of your pastor, testify, let your testimony ring out, stand up for your Savior Jesus Christ; let the world know that you honestly and sincerely believe in Jesus as your Redeemer, that you believe in the life-giving message your Church is proclaiming, and that you are behind it and are backing it up sincerely and fervently.

And finally, give the Church adequate financial support. It has pleased the Lord to order things so that the Church needs money to carry on its work, and this money it is our privilege to supply. And let it be a liberal support. God has loved us with an immeasurably great love; let us also show a large love by giving generously to the work of our Church. It is woefully poor policy to skimp here. But if you really love your Church and really feel your responsibility and really want to uphold the arms of your servants in the Word, if you want to have the Church do its work as well and effectively as possible, let there be a liberal, a generous financial support.

God give us grace to see all these truths! May our hearts be filled with love toward Him, our great, divine Redeemer, and may we all step forward to uphold the arms of our leaders in order that Israel may prevail, that the Church may succeed, the Word may be spread, and souls may be saved! Amen.

O. H. S.

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## Initial Address on Mark 16, 15.

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In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the true and living God, who rules the heaven, the earth, and the air, beloved fellow-Lutherans, dear fellow-men:—

An important charge in the Church has been delivered to an insignificant servant of the Lord. Keenly conscious of the duties, the responsibilities, and the possibilities of this peculiar activity of our Church and aware of my imperfections and the limitations of my talents, I humbly lift up my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help and send a sincere prayer to the Throne of Mercy and cry: O Lord Jesus, Thou only Head of Thy Church, Thou Lord of the harvest, look down with tender compassion upon me, a poor, miserable creature, and forgive me all my sins. Mercifully replenish me with the gifts necessary for the faithful and successful fulfilment of this position in Thy kingdom. Support the feeble knees and strengthen the trembling hands. Precious Redeemer, Thou hast said: "My strength is made perfect in weakness." This promise cheers me. Joyfully I cleave to it and confidently hope that Thy power will rest upon my infirmities. Establish Thou the work of my hands. Thy will be done. Hear my fervent cry, my Shield and Fortress, for the sake of Thy superabounding love, manifested in Thy lowly birth and Thy painful Passion. Amen.

At the very beginning I respectfully solicit the prayers, the helpful advice, the good will, and the active cooperation of our efficient, pioneer Radio Committee, Professors J. H. C. Fritz and Walter A. Maier; of the venerable faculty of this Seminary and the Board of Control; of the student-body; of the pastors and teachers of our Church, particularly of this city; of the children who render programs, as well as of all artists who serve this station with their talents; of the Lutheran Laymen's League and the Walther League, these live organizations of aggressive and progressive Lutherans; of the Lutheran Publicity Organization of this city;—in fact, of the whole radio audience of KFUD.

"Preach the Gospel to every creature," these words, recorded Mark 16, 15 in the Holy Bible, are the solemn command of the risen Lord to His Church. Since all power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth by the Father, since all things are made by Him, since He has purchased us with His own blood, since He has converted and sanctified us through His Holy Spirit, He has authority to charge His Church with the commission of world-wide Gospel-preaching. *What is the Gospel?* This question admits of only one correct answer. "Surely He [the Messiah] hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was



upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed," that is Isaiah's definition of the Gospel. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as gold and silver, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot," that is Peter's definition of the Gospel. "Christ died for our sins," that is Paul's definition of the Gospel. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His [God's] Son, cleanseth us from all sins," that is John's definition of the Gospel. "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," that is the angel's definition of the Gospel. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," *that is God's own definition of the Gospel.*

In speaking of the Gospel, Jesus uses the definite article "the," saying, "*Preach THE Gospel*"; not, Preach *a* Gospel. There is only one true Gospel, the Gospel of the prophets, the apostles, the evangelists, the angels, and the Lord Himself. Every other gospel is a counterfeit, poison, a lie. To preach a false and perverted gospel is beating the air and speaking into the air. Paul has this to say with regard to corrupt forms of the Gospel: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1, 6—8.

*The Gospel shall be preached.* The Gospel is written in the Scriptures by inspiration of God, so that men can read it. However, it is also to be proclaimed. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" "Declare ye among the nations and publish, . . . publish and conceal not." "What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops,"—these texts enjoin upon the Church to promulgate the Gospel. Has not the office of the holy ministry been instituted by the Lord for the express purpose of preaching the Word of Reconciliation?

*Every creature* is to be reached with the preaching of the Gospel. Every living person, man and woman, boy and girl, the white and the black, the red, the brown, and the yellow race, the mute, the blind, the sick, the dying, and even the deaf, are to have the Gospel preached to them. Why? Because every creature, and this includes the modern man, needs the Gospel. Every human creature is under sin. It is written, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of

God." Every human being is under the wrath of God. It is written: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them." Every human creature can be saved only by the Gospel. It is written: "Brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved." Because sin is universal, the preaching of the Gospel, the only power of God unto salvation, shall also be universal.

By a particular manifestation of God's grace the Lutheran Church has in a world of religious confusion and in a day of appalling defection and apostasy in the visible Church clung steadfastly to the unimpaired and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus and His love. Its theology revolves around the crucified Redeemer. Its institutions for the training of laborers for the Lord's harvest-field are dedicated to the end of days, not to anything new, but to something older than the mountains and the earth and the world and the sea, namely, the promulgation of an eternal decree of God, that in Christ Jesus salvation shall appear to all men. Its only answer to so-called "Modernism" and "Liberalism," which perverts and denies the truth of the Gospel, is, "Thus saith the Lord." Its children sing:—

"Jesus sinners doth receive!"  
Oh, may all this saying ponder  
Who in sin's delusions live  
And from God and heaven wander!  
This alone sure hope can give—  
"Jesus sinners doth receive!"

With the help of God this broadcasting station KFUE will remain "the Gospel Voice," dispatching to the uttermost parts of our country and even beyond its borders that message which silences the voice of an accusing conscience, which binds and heals the broken and bleeding heart, which throws light into the dark and dismal tomb, which opens the pearly portals of paradise — *the Gospel*. KFUE will continue to be a fortress against the gates of hell for the defense of the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures, yea, for every doctrine of God's Word; a tower of hope and strength for the weak and weary; a station of refuge and rescue for the oppressed and distressed; a lighthouse for the blinded and the groping; a preacher on the housetops for every sinner seriously seeking his soul's salvation.

In conclusion, may every Lutheran render his neighbor a service of love and ask him to hear God's pure Word over Station KFUE! May every non-Lutheran follow the example of the Christians at Berea and compare the Lutheran doctrine with the Scriptures, whether the things we preach be true! May every unconverted sinner obey the voice of the Gospel in the air and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as God's Son and his only and personal Savior from sin and



hell! The same Jesus who has said: "Preach the Gospel to every creature," has also said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." "May the songs and music coming through this medium from the air," to quote from the address with which this station was consecrated by the chairman of the Seminary Board of Control, the Rev. R. Kretzschmar, "ever remind the great radio audience of the wonderful Christmas-song of the heavenly hosts and of the celestial harmonies resounding from the skies above the fields of Bethlehem, and may those strains everywhere on earth be reechoed to the end of days: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!' Yea, may we *Keep Forward, Upward, and Onward* and labor and pray for the realization of our fondest hopes with regard to a far-reaching development of this station through its removal in due time to our new Concordia Seminary. Brethren and friends, would to God that some day the Gospel would, through KFUO, flood the whole world as the waters cover the sea!

"Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, — unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end! Amen."

St. Louis, Mo.

HERMAN H. HOHENSTEIN.

## Predigtentwurf über Luf. 13, 1—9.

(Neujahrstag.)

Neujahr eine Zeit der Wünsche: Gesundheit, Glück, Segen, Freude usw. Viele denken dabei nur an dieses Lebens Güter, nicht an das eine, das not ist. Wie töricht! Alles eitel. Andere gehen blindlings in die dunkle Zukunft und sagen: Das Leben nehmen, wie es kommt! Wie trostlos! — Wir Christen kennen etwas Höheres und Besseres. Wir bedenken, wie wir zu Gott stehen, wie es um unser Herz bestellt ist. Nur dann können wir das Jahr fröhlich beginnen und selig vollenden. Hier im Text ist ein Spiegel, worin wir uns beschauen müssen. Da wird uns die Frage beantwortet:

**Wann wird uns das neue Jahr ein glückseliges sein?**

1. Wenn wir bei Beginn desselben bußfertig an unsere Sünden gedenken;
2. wenn wir uns damit trösten, daß Gott uns abermal ein neues Gnadenjahr beschert.

### 1.

a. B. 1. Etliche berichten dem Herrn die Schreckensgeschichte von den im Tempel ermordeten Galiläern, während sie mit Opfern beschäftigt waren. Die Mitteilung der Betreffenden floß aus hoffärtiger,

selbstgerechter Gefinnung. Sie vergaßen das „euch“ und das „dich“ in der eben gehaltenen Bußpredigt Christi, Kap. 12, 57—59, suchten sich zu rechtfertigen, hielten sich für besser als die andern. Sie wähten, Jesu Urtheil werde etwa lauten: „Das sind ganz besonders große Sünder gewesen; darum so schwere Strafe, ein solches Ende mit Schrecken.“ Jesus erwähnt noch einen ähnlichen Unglücksfall, B. 4, den sie wohl schon früher ebenso falsch beurteilt hatten. — Diese Sorte von Leuten gibt es noch. Viele denken bei den Heimsuchungen anderer an ganz besondere Sünder und Sünden und erkennen nicht, was sie selber sind und selber verdient haben, wenn Gott mit ihnen ins Gericht gehen wollte. Das ist aber Hochmut, Sicherheit, Selbstgerechtigkeit, wobei der Ernst und Eifer Gottes wider alle Sünde abgeschüttelt wird.

b. B. 2. 4. 5. Der Herr verwirft ihre falschen Ansichten. Wohl leugnet er nicht, daß jene Unglücksfälle Gottesgerichte seien; aber sein doppeltes „Nein“ zerstört den Wahn, als ob die Größe der Strafe notwendig auf die Schwere der Schuld schließen lasse. Schonungslos bricht er den Stab über „alle“, auch über diese lieblosen Richter, und droht ihnen, daß dasselbe Verderben auch sie treffen werde, wenn sie keine Buße und Besserung zeigten. — Dieses Urtheil Christi geht über alle Menschen, auch über uns, wenn wir in sicherer und selbstgerechter Gefinnung uns über unsere Mitsünder erheben und vergessen, daß wir vor Gott allesamt in gleicher Schuld und gleicher Verdammnis liegen. Wer seine eigene Sünde nicht erkennt, sondern unbüßfertig von einem Jahr ins andere tritt, dem mögen tausend Freunde ein glückliches Neujahr wünschen: er bleibt doch der unglücklichste Mensch von der Welt und tappt hoffnungslos einer finsternen Zeit und einer noch finsternen Ewigkeit entgegen. Tag und Nacht hängt das Schwert des Unglücks über seinem schuldbeladenen Haupt. „Es ist hie kein Unterschied“ usw. „Die Sünde ist der Leute Verderben.“ Ein Gottesgericht nach dem andern müßte über uns und unsere Kinder — über Leib und Leben, Hab und Gut, Ehre und guten Namen — hereinbrechen, wenn Gott in seiner feuerbrennenden Gerechtigkeit mit uns ins Gericht gehen wollte. Hier liegt der erste Schritt zu einem glückseligen neuen Jahr: büßfertig an unsere vielen Sünden gedenken, womit wir Gottes Zorn und Strafe tausendmal verdient haben. Wer sich dessen weigert, der hat nichts Gutes zu hoffen. — Gott helfe uns, daß wir mit Reue und Leid erkennen, was für arme, elende, sündhafte Menschen wir sind! Nur dann wird der Trost haften, daß Gott uns abermal ein neues Gnadenjahr beschenkt.

## 2.

a. B. 6. Der Feigenbaum ist der Mensch, der die Gnadenmittel gebraucht, der Weinberg die Kirche Christi, der Herr des Weinbergs Gott, der Weingärtner Christus. Wen Gott durch Wort und Geist in seinen Weinberg gepflanzt hat, an dem sucht er Frucht, Früchte des



Glaubens, der Liebe, des neuen Lebens, gute Werke. Und mit Recht. Seine treue Seelenarbeit mit dem Spaten des Gesetzes, dem Regen seines Wortes und dem Sonnenschein seiner Gnade darf nicht vergeblich sein. Er muß fragen: Wo ist meine Frucht? — Das geht uns alle an, die wir Bäume in Gottes Garten sind; die wir nicht bloß drei Jahre, sondern ganze Menschenleben unter dem Schall des Wortes sitzen; an denen mit Lehren, Ermahnen, Warnen, Strafen, Trösten, mit Lieben und mit Leiden so viel gearbeitet worden ist.

b. V. 7. Der große Ernst des Weinbergsherrn. Er klagt dem Gärtner seine Unzufriedenheit. Bittere Enttäuschung! Das lange vergebliche Suchen nach der erwarteten Frucht reizt ihn zum gerechten Zorn. Er redet schon vom Abhauen, vom Ausrotten des Baumes, weil er nur das Land hindert, seinen Platz nicht verdient hat, den andern Bäumen Saft und Kraft wegnimmt, zu nichts nütze ist. — Dies scharfe Urteil ging einst über das so reichbegnadete und doch so unfruchtbare Israel; das trifft aber noch alle Christen und Gemeinden, die laß und träge sind im Guten, an denen alle Liebes- und Gnadenarbeit umsonst ist, die die erste Liebe verlassen und undankbar gegen Gottes Wohltaten find. Da ist das Abhauen oft nahe.

c. V. 8. 9. O Wunder der göttlichen Liebe und Geduld! Der himmlische Weingärtner, Christus, unser Heiland, legt Fürbitte ein für den unfruchtbaren Baum: „Laß ihn noch dies Jahr!“ Er will noch das letzte an ihm versuchen: umgraben und bedüngen, allen rettenden Liebeseifer an ihm beweisen. Er läßt den Baum noch stehen, ersucht noch eine Gnadenfrist, ein neues Gnadenjahr für ihn, und das alles in der Hoffnung, daß er endlich Frucht bringen werde. — Welch ein Trost beim Beginn eines neuen Jahres für jeden Christen und jede Gemeinde! An wie mancher Frucht hat es doch gefehlt! Und wie kümmerlich waren oft die Früchte! Daß wir noch stehen, haben wir wahrlich nur unserm fürbittenden Heiland zu verdanken. In großer Geduld will er auf die Frucht warten. Ein Gnadenjahr nach dem andern schenkt er uns. Und der Vater hat Erbarmen und läßt uns um Jesu willen Schonung widerfahren. — Ach, da wollen wir uns doch durch Gottes Güte und Langmut zur Buße bewegen lassen und in allen guten Werken fleißiger werden. Und das wollen wir tun, solange die Gnadenzeit noch währt, ehe er das furchtbare Richterurteil fällt: „Wo nicht, so haue ihn danach ab!“ — Wie Israel, so hat jeder Mensch und jede Gemeinde ihre bestimmte Gnadenzeit; ihre Dauer ist uns verborgen. Noch will Christus uns aus dem Verderben „herauslieben“. Diese Geduld wollen wir für unsere Seligkeit achten und Gott bitten: Lied 48, 4. Dann wird alles gut, hier zeitlich und dort ewiglich. Glückseliger Mensch im Leben und im Sterben, der diesen Trost mit ins neue Jahr hineinnimmt und im getrosteten Glauben alle Tage betet: Lied 226, 5. 6.

D. R. Hüfchen.

## Outlines on Free Texts.

### MATT. 6, 9.

The petition of the Lord's Prayer which takes precedence of them all must necessarily be the most important. Jesus never made a mistake, nor did He utter His words in a casual or haphazard way. Things which He puts in the first place must needs be first. In a thousand prayers we would not think of this petition as the foremost if Jesus had not taught us this heavenly wisdom.

#### THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL PETITIONS: "HALLOWED BE THY NAME."

It is the most important petition,

1. *Because nothing is greater than God's name;*
2. *Because this petition calls for the hallowing of God's name.*

#### 1.

Names borne by men are mere means for identification. Numbers in place of them would serve the same purpose. Names like Long, Brown, Smith, Clay, Breakspear, Theodore = gift of God, George = farmer, offer no information regarding the bearer's person, attributes, or occupation.

God's names cannot be separated from His person. God's name is God Himself. Calling upon God's name or praising God's name is worshipping God. Ps. 48, 10; 96, 2; 103, 1; 113, 3; 72, 19; Zech. 13, 9; Rev. 15, 4; cp. John 16, 23. Jesus prays: "Father, glorify Thy name." Fearing God's name is equivalent to fearing God Himself. Mal. 4, 2. Trusting in His name is trusting in God. Matt. 12, 21. In His name all knees should bow. Phil. 2, 9f.

God would be a nonentity to us if He had not revealed Himself by His name. His person, attributes, and works are revealed to us by His names. Names like Father, Jehovah, Sabaoth, Immanuel, Jesus Christ, Comforter, tell us who He is. — As God is holy, so His name is holy. Ps. 111, 9; Is. 57, 15. As God is omnipresent, so His name is near. Ps. 75, 1. He is from everlasting, His name also. Ps. 135, 13; 72, 17; Is. 63, 16. He is omnipotent, His name is great in might. Jer. 10, 6. He is one, His name is one. Zech. 14, 9. — He helps and saves us and forgives our sins for His name's sake. 1 Sam. 12, 22; Ps. 23, 3; 25, 11; 91, 14; 106, 8; 79, 9; 20, 2; 124, 8; 1 John 2, 12; John 17, 11; 1, 12; 20, 31; Joel 2, 32; Acts 2, 21; 3, 16; 4, 12; Mal. 4, 2; Jer. 23, 6; Luke 24, 47. The blessed in heaven have "the Father's name written in their foreheads." Rev. 14, 1.

Could there be a more important petition than the first? Is there anything greater than God's name? Our first aim should be to call upon, confess, and magnify the only true and living God. In Him



alone we have salvation. He alone is able to answer our prayers. The recitation of the petitions would be like the mumblings and chatter of the heathen if the glorification of the name of the only true God would not be uppermost in our minds.

But the true Christian is not merely concerned about knowing the one true God and telling forth with his lips only His praises in Biblical language, but he is vitally concerned about hallowing God's name.

## 2.

"God's name is indeed holy in itself." Nothing can be detracted from its holiness by the most blatant blasphemer, nothing added to it by the most pious and ardent Christian. God is not subject to change, neither is His name.

"But we pray . . . holy among us also." We implore God that we may at all times consider, cherish, and revere His name as a treasure above all treasures. We are so prone to forget His name and fail to value it as highly as we should, hence we have all reason to ask that God may give us that grace to hallow His name.

God's name is hallowed "when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity." God's Word is the holy shrine of God's name, for therein God has inscribed His saving name. And His Word is as holy and undefiled as His name. We shall prove that we hallow His name by adhering steadfastly to pure doctrine. Thus we hold fast His name, Rev. 2, 13; 3, 8. Thus we shall prove that we love His name, and then we shall find an abiding place in it. Ps. 69, 36.

We hallow God's name also by leading a holy life according to His Word. We walk in the name of our God, Micah 4, 5; we praise His name among the heathen, Rom. 15, 9; 2 Sam. 22, 50; we do all in His name, Col. 3, 17, if we seek to conform our lives according to His holy Word. With His name on our lips and in our hearts we will depart from iniquity. 2 Tim. 2, 19.

We dishallow and profane the name of God if we teach otherwise than God's Word teaches. Ezek. 22, 26. False prophets may come in the name of Christ, but they are deceivers. Matt. 24, 5; Luke 21, 8. On Judgment Day they still will say: "Lord, Lord"; but they will hear: Luke 7, 23. Cp. Deut. 18, 19.

They, too, dishonor God's name who live otherwise than God's Word teaches. Rom. 2, 23f.; Matt. 7, 21.

Woe unto those who thus profane God's name! Cp. Mal. 1, 14; Ps. 79, 6; 109, 13; Jer. 10, 25; Prov. 10, 7.

Is not this petition more important than all the rest? It teaches us self-forgetfulness and to seek our greatest treasures in God. Every one of our prayers would be an abomination in the sight of God if the sanctifying of God's name would not be uppermost in our minds. Our Christianity would be a sham and a shame if we

failed to honor God rightly. But if, in all sincerity, we ask that God grant us to believe in, and to live according to, His Word, then we may continue in praying the remaining petitions. Matt. 6, 33.

Our names, as meaningless and worthless as they are in themselves, are written in heaven, Luke 10, 20, in the book of life, Phil. 4, 3, because we are baptized into the name of the only God of salvation.

B.

### MATT. 6, 10.

"Lord, teach us to pray," so the disciples petitioned the Savior, and thereupon Christ taught them the Lord's Prayer. a. The Lord's Prayer is the *best prayer*, a perfect prayer, not only because it was *given us by our Lord*, but also because it was given us by Him to serve us as a *pattern*. Matt. 6, 9: "After this manner therefore pray ye." b. The Lord's Prayer is also a *necessary* prayer. It includes *all things* for which we should pray. Hence, when we pray this prayer, we must carefully heed not only each petition, but also each *word*, for this beautiful prayer contains no *unnecessary* word. As often as we pray this or any other prayer, we, too, should petition our Lord: "Lord, teach us to pray," in order that we may pray in a manner pleasing to Him. c. One of the most necessary prayers is the petition of the text: "Thy kingdom come."

### "THY KINGDOM COME."

Let us learn

1. *For what we are praying the Lord in this petition;*
2. *What this petition requires of us.*

#### 1.

A. For what do we pray the Lord in this petition? a. The Second Petition is really a continuation of the First Petition; for we shall hallow God's name only when His kingdom comes to us. Hence the Lord's kingdom and its coming to us is of weighty importance. b. What kingdom is meant? 1. Not the Kingdom of Power; for we are already subjects in that kingdom, Ps. 66, 5—7; Matt. 28, 18; 2. but the Kingdom of Grace and the Kingdom of Glory. c. The *Kingdom of Grace* is 1. a spiritual kingdom. Col. 1, 12—14; Rom. 14, 17, 18. 2. It is the Christian Church, the communion of saints. Eph. 5, 25—27; 1 Pet. 2, 5. Luther: "What is the kingdom of God? Nothing else than . . . that God sent His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord, into the world to redeem and deliver us from the power of the devil to bring us to Himself, and to govern us as the King of righteousness, life, and salvation against sin, death, and an evil conscience, for which end He has also bestowed His Holy Ghost, who is to bring these things home to us by His holy Word and to illumine and strengthen us in the faith by His



power." (*Triglotta*, p. 711.) d. The *Kingdom of Glory* is heaven with all its bliss, where the subjects of Christ's Kingdom of Grace will enjoy eternal happiness with Christ in perfection. Luke 12, 32; Titus 3, 7; Luke 23, 43; John 10, 27, 28; Matt. 25, 34. Luther: "Dear Father, we pray . . . that through the Word and the power of the Holy Ghost Thy kingdom may prevail among us and the kingdom of the devil be put down, that he may have no right or power over us, until at last it shall be utterly destroyed and sin, death, and hell shall be exterminated, that we may live forever in perfect righteousness and blessedness." (*Triglotta*, p. 713.)

B. In the Second Petition we pray that Christ's Kingdom of Grace and His Kingdom of Glory may *come*. a. True, the kingdom of Christ will come without our prayer; for it is God's kingdom, which He establishes without our prayer, by His grace. John 3, 16; Ps. 145, 13. b. But we pray in this petition that it may come *unto us also*, that is, we pray that Christ may establish His kingdom, His Church, among us on earth, so that it may be spread over the whole earth and the elect of God may be gathered into Christ's fold. Matt. 9, 38; Is. 9, 7; 55, 5; Rev. 14, 6. In short, we pray that God would make us and many others true members of His kingdom, His Church. c. This prayer is necessary. God's kingdom must come to us, or else no one will be saved; for by nature all men are in the kingdom of Satan, under the wrath of God and His just condemnation. John 3, 5, 6; Mark 16, 15, 16; Eph. 2, 1—5. d. However, we pray also that Christ's Kingdom of Glory may come, that is, that Christ may come to judge the quick and the dead, destroy the power of sin, death, and the devil, and receive His saints into eternal glory. 1 Cor. 15, 54; 2 Cor. 4, 14; Rev. 22, 17; 19, 7; 21, 2. What a beautiful prayer!

C. As we pray for the coming of Christ's Kingdom of Grace and His Kingdom of Glory, we also pray for the *means* by which the kingdom is established. God's kingdom comes to us, here in time and thereafter in eternity, when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Ghost, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life. a. We, therefore, pray that God would give us His Holy Ghost. Ezek. 36, 27; John 14, 15—17; 1 John 3, 24; 4, 13; 5, 6. b. We pray that by His grace, through the gracious operation of the Holy Ghost, we may *believe His holy Word*. Only through faith in Christ Jesus, our Savior, who with His merits is offered to us in the Gospel, do we become members of the Kingdom of Grace. Rom. 10, 17; 5, 1; John 5, 24; 11, 25; Rom. 10, 9, 10. We thus pray that God, through His Holy Spirit, by means of His Word, would grant us true faith and keep us therein unto life eternal with all the elect saints. c. Lastly we pray that God would grant us *grace to lead a godly life* in true faith. John 15, 16; Rom. 7, 4; Phil. 1, 11; Col. 1, 10.

D. What a wonderful prayer! We pray in this petition, a. that God would, through the Gospel, gather unto Himself His Church among us; b. that He would give us and others His Holy Spirit to the end that by His grace He may work regeneration in us and kindle faith in our hearts, so that we and others may 1. believe His holy Word, 2. live in true holiness here on earth, and 3. attain everlasting glory in heaven.

This wonderful prayer, however, also requires much of us.

## 2.

A. What does this petition require of us? a. It requires that we *pray earnestly and ceaselessly* for the coming of Christ's blessed kingdom. 1. We should pray that His kingdom may come to us and remain with us. 1 Thess. 5, 17; Eph. 6, 18; Matt. 26, 41; 6, 7. 2. We should pray that His kingdom may come to others. Gen. 18, 32; Matt. 15, 27; John 4, 49; 1 Tim. 2, 1; Matt. 9, 38. b. It requires that we receive the Word of God in true faith. John 12, 36; Acts 16, 31; John 6, 40; 20, 29. c. It requires that we prove our faith by holy works. Luke 8, 15; John 15, 5; Gal. 5, 22; Eph. 5, 9; Jas. 2, 17. 20. d. It requires that we confess Christ before men and preach His Word. Matt. 10, 32; Rom. 10, 9. 10; 1 John 4, 15; Matt. 28, 19. 20; Mark 16, 15. 16. e. It requires that we resist the devil, who is always trying to destroy God's kingdom. Luke 8, 12; 1 Pet. 5, 8; Eph. 6, 11.

B. We should pray this petition not only with our lips, but also with our lives. This we cannot do by our own reason or strength; hence Luther rightly says in his explanation: "When our heavenly Father gives us His holy Spirit, so that *by His grace* we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life." It is *by grace* that God's kingdom comes to us and that we are preserved in it. This is a source of great comfort to us. Our salvation does not rest in our hands, but in the mighty hands of our heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. The Triune God assures us: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Luke 12, 32. This promise should encourage us to believe in Him and to pray with cheerfulness and confidence: "Thy kingdom come." Amen.

St. Louis, Mo.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER.

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## MATT. 6, 10b.

By faith you have accepted the great Creator and Redeemer as your God. Your constant desire, uttered in the prayer directed to your heavenly Father, is: "Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God." Ps. 143, 10.

*"THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."*

1. *This petition calls attention to our heavenly Father's will.*
2. *It assures us that His will is done in heaven.*
3. *It is our prayer that it be so done on earth.*

1.

God's will is a good, gracious, loving, merciful, long-suffering, faithful, just, holy, omnipotent will.

Natural man has a faint knowledge of God's will, of the Moral Law. Conscience. Rom. 2, 14, 15. The unregenerate knows nothing of God's will in spiritual matters. 1 Cor. 2, 14.

The enlightened mind of the Christian knows a great deal about God's revealed will. He judges all things, 1 Cor. 2, 15; 14, 24; he knows what the will of God supplies, 1 Cor. 2, 12. Yet where God's will is not revealed, even he must bow humbly in the dust and confess with St. Paul: "Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" Rom. 11, 33f.; Is. 55, 8, 9; 45, 15. No contradictory wills in God. (*Triglotta*, 1075, 36.)

The only reliable revelation of the will of God is the Bible. "Nothing can be affirmed of God's will without God's Word." (*Triglotta*, 319, 17.) The Law of God reveals His good, loving, holy, just will. The loving mother wills the happiness of her child. In order to spare it the pain of a blistered finger, she warns, "Don't touch the fire!" To spare us the pains of bitterness, anger, hatred, heartache, wounds, suffering, death, damnation, our heavenly Father reveals to us His will, His Law, His commandments. If we keep these precepts, it shall be well with us. Then there will be love, charity, decency, honesty, happiness, godliness, and righteousness, which bring happiness and exalt the nations of the earth. — The Gospel opens the heart of our Father still more, and we there behold the good and gracious will in Christ Jesus that saves us, His eternal decrees for our salvation — for our call, conversion, justification, sanctification, glorification. John 1, 18; Matt. 17, 5; John 6, 40; 1 Tim. 2, 4.

2.

Our Father's will is done in heaven. "In heaven" does not refer to the lower visible regions surrounding the earth, though there, too, His will is being done. Clouds carry moisture and the blessings of God to the mountains. The stars hasten in their immense revolutions to do His pleasure. The heavens declare His glory. Ps. 19, 1.

The term "heaven" rather refers to the perfected saints, especially to the angels. To do God's will is their delight, the joy of their existence, and the ecstasy of their being. The angels are loyal to the will of God and carry out His commandments, whether it be to rain brimstone upon Sodom or to save Lot; whether to destroy



the 185,000 men of Sennacherib's army or to deliver Hezekiah. All the hosts of angels, all their ranks, principalities, powers, with one accord do His pleasure. Heb. 1, 14; Ps. 103, 20, 21. They do the will of their adorable God with dispatch, Ps. 104, 4, and not, like Pharaoh, under duress after the tenth plague, Ex. 12, 31 ff., or like Balaam, who blessed Israel after being assured of the wages of unrighteousness, Num. 24, or like Moses, Jeremiah, or Jonah, who hesitated to do God's will and conformed to it only when they saw no other way out.

## 3.

"The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer." The Lord God is almighty. Ps. 135, 6; Dan. 4, 31, 32. In His wise providence our heavenly Father wills that all things must work together for good. Rom. 8, 28. Joseph is sold, Gen. 37, 28, but God saves much people alive, Gen. 45, 5, 7; 50, 20. Caesar Augustus taxes all the world, Luke 2, and Mary is brought to the city of David. The Prince of Life is betrayed, crucified, killed, and the lost race is redeemed, Acts 2, 23; 4, 27 f. "There was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad," Acts 8, 1; but "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere, preaching the Word," v. 4. — The irresistible will of God. God's "must." John 5, 28; Matt. 25, 31 ff.; 2 Cor. 5, 10. — Even Satan cannot thwart this will of God. Job 1; Prov. 19, 21.

Nevertheless, there is a rebellion abroad, an evil counsel and will, of the devil, the world, and our flesh. The devil sinned from the beginning. 1 John 3, 8. He takes and gives an insidious counsel as the arch-deceiver to foment rebellion against the will of the Most High, Gen. 3, 1 ff.; 2 Thess. 2, 9; 1 Pet. 5, 8, in order that God's name may not be hallowed and His kingdom may not come. — His pliable ally is the world. 1 John 2, 15—17. Examples: Pharaoh, Ex. 5, 2; Delilah, Judg. 16; Potiphar's wife, Gen. 39. — Our flesh is prone to say: "Lord, I know Thee that Thou art a hard man." Matt. 25, 24. "The flesh distrusts God, trusts in present things, seeks human aid in calamities, even contrary to God's will, flees from affliction." (*Triglotta*, 169, 49.) "Now, if in St. Paul and in other regenerate men the natural or carnal free will, even after regeneration, strives against God's Law, it will be much more obstinate and hostile to God's Law and will before regeneration." *Ibid.*, 887, 18.) Gen. 8, 22; Jer. 17, 9; Rom. 8, 7, 22; 7, 14—24. We pray that this evil counsel and will be broken and hindered.

God's will is to be done among us. Luther: "I do not ask that Thy will be done, but that my will be done. For Thy will is now my will, and I get my own will best by unquestioning acceptance of Thy will." David: Ps. 119, 6; 2 Sam. 15, 26. Job 1, 21; 13, 15. The friends of St. Paul, Acts 21, 13. Jesus: Ps. 40, 7, 8; John 6, 38; 4, 34; Matt. 20, 18; 26, 39. So we: 1 Pet. 4, 1 ff.; Rom. 8, 28; Hab. 3, 17.

Heaven is heaven since there is the full fruition of God's good and gracious will. If the will of God were so done on earth, there would be peace and harmony and blessedness and heaven. Let us pray and do. "Having done the will of God, ye shall receive the promise." Heb. 10, 36.

Cleveland, O.

H. W. BARTELS.

### MATT. 6, 11; LUKE 11, 3.

There is a fine spirit of penitent humility and a tone of sterling modesty about this petition. Have you ever thought about this? Being sinners, we "have deserved nothing but punishment, are worthy of none of the things for which we pray." And yet, believing that God "purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us," will grant our prayer, we ask Him, *who alone can preserve life*, to give us our daily bread. Bread, in its commonest, world-wide meaning, is the most essential article of food, "the staff of life." We are mindful of the fact that even "bread" is *more than we deserve* from the hand of the Giver of all good gifts, the very riches of whose goodness constantly lead us to repentance. Rom. 2, 4. Are *you* always aware of this?

And yet, there is no denying that "bread" is here but typical of all that we need for our bodily wants, especially food and clothing. 1 Tim. 6, 8. (Luther.) Being familiar with the two points treated in our Catechism, let us study the Fourth Petition from a somewhat different viewpoint, *viz.*, that of sanctification. For every Christian who humbly implores God for the gift of daily bread has the best and most effective preventive in the world against two besetting sins, the sin of covetousness and the sin of anxious care.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S HUMBLE PRAYER FOR DAILY BREAD.

1. *A constant curb against covetousness.*
2. *A cure for corroding cares.*

##### 1.

a. In asking God, the Giver of all good gifts, to give us our daily bread, we cannot but be reminded daily that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray thus, hates that sin which is ever threatening to take possession of our susceptible heart: the sin of covetousness, the love of money, the desire for wealth, the inordinate craving for more than is justly and rightly and honestly ours—a root of evil which exists also in the hearts of Christians. God has not only placed His barrier in His Law against this sin, twice telling us, "Thou shalt not covet" (Ninth and Tenth

Commandments), He has also placed a curb against it in this petition. For when we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we are asking God only to supply *our actual needs*. 1 Tim. 6, 8; Prov. 30, 7—9.

But the covetous man, haughtily ignoring God's double warning and unmindful of the fact that even the supply of his actual needs is God's gift, and not the result of his own brain and brawn, wickedly craves more than he needs, craftily seeking that which is his neighbor's by divine allotment, Matt. 23, 14 (the Pharisees), or obtaining it by a show of right, 1 Kings 21, 1—16 (Ahab coveting Naboth's vineyard); Is. 5, 8. To what cursed hypocrisy and cruelty the sin of covetousness has driven men! 1 Tim. 6, 9, 10. Even the pagans recognized the heinousness of avarice. (*E.g.*, Vergil: *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames?* *Aeneid*, III, 56.)

b. How does covetousness, avarice, harmonize with this petition? Not at all. Jesus here teaches us to pray to God for our actual needs, for "bread," not for riches, wealth, great possessions. (Apply again the prayer of Agur, the son of Jakeh. Prov. 30, 8, 9.) The covetous man denying the law of love ignores the poor whom God has laid at his door. He refuses to deal his bread to the hungry. Is. 58, 7. He cannot pray, "Give *us* . . . our daily bread," for he is ever laying up treasures *for himself only*. (Dives and Lazarus, Luke 16, 19—21; parable of the Rich Fool, Luke 12, 16—21.)

*Application.* — Let us prove our hearts in the light of this petition and see whether covetousness and avarice are far removed from us, lest our prayer for daily bread be mere hypocrisy. But if we sincerely and diligently pray this request taught us by Jesus Himself, we have a sure and constant curb against covetousness.

## 2.

However, the sincere and humble prayer to God for daily bread is also an excellent and effective cure against another sin, *viz.*, the sin of anxious and corroding care.

a. We ask our Father in heaven to give us our daily bread. Has Jesus Himself not promised that God would hear us? Has God ever broken His promise? Is it, according to your view of God, at all possible for Him to break a promise? Listen to Jesus' wonderful assurance of God's care for us: Matt. 6, 25—34. These are not fine fancies or fictions told in pretty words, but facts, heavenly facts, spoken by the mouth of the Son of God, who taught us to pray the Fourth Petition in order to cure us of harrowing anxiety and gnawing cares. Cf. Paul's lovely assurance: Rom. 8, 32. Do you believe what Jesus and Paul say? It is all a question of faith. "O ye of little faith!" was the Savior's rebuke which he repeatedly administered to His disciples. Heb. 11, 6. Praying the Fourth Petition in trusting faith, you will have the best deterrent against care.



b. What is your first concern in life? Money, wealth? No wonder your mind is never at rest. Have you forgotten Matt. 6, 33? Make the kingdom of God and His righteousness your first concern, and all these things which the Gentiles seek after will be added unto you. O, do you suppose for one moment that the widow giving her last two mites, "all her living," went hungry next day? Mark 12, 41—44; Luke 21, 1—4.

c. Why work, then? you ask. Simply because God so ordered it 2 Thess. 3, 10—12. "If any would not work, neither should he eat," is really a Jewish proverb (Talmud). Work is also a law of nature. What would you do if you had no work, business, occupation? Can you think of any other way of engaging and exercising the faculties with which you are endowed than by work, honest, energetic, and diligent work?—In the Fourth Petition you are asking God to bless your work. In this spirit of perfect contentment let us work ("with quietness," 2 Thess. 3, 12) simply because God has so arranged our faculties that they must be exercised, although we know that the result of our toils may be large or small or nil. God has nowhere proportioned His "gifts" according to our efforts. Even if the results are nil, we should nevertheless not worry; for God will provide through friends or otherwise. The Bible nowhere insinuates that a disgrace attaches to poverty. Cf. the poverty of Jesus (though rich, yet poor for our sakes, 2 Cor. 8, 9) and His dependence upon the assistance of earthly friends. And remember: Wealth is by no means a safeguard against cares and worries. Shall we, as Christians, be less content with our lot than the pagans? Cf. Theognis:—

I want not wealth; I only ask to live  
On frugal means without corroding care.

*Conclusion.*—In our materialistic age, where vitamins, calories, atoms, and electrons, economy "scientifically" exact, bolstered up with minute calculations, are the watchword of the day, let us remember that we should ask Him who can preserve or destroy His creatures to give us our daily bread. Despite all that may be discovered, "science" will never find the *ultimate* cause of life and its sustenance; for that cause is the invisible God, whom no man can see. Let us commend not only our souls, but also our bodies to His care in trusting prayer. He knows (we very often do not) what we have need of, He knows it before we ask for it. Matt. 6, 8. Let us never fail, as dear children, humbly to ask Him to supply our daily needs!

Concordia, Mo.

O. W. WISMAR.



## Literatur.

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**Synodalbericht des Minnesota-Distrikts** der Missouri-Synode. 1925. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Preis: 45 Cts.

Information, schriftgemäße Belehrung über die großen Werke unserer Synode und dann die evangelische Ermunterung zu denselben wird unsere Gemeinden immer mehr und mehr zu dem gottgewollten Ziele führen, das P. C. B. Selb zu erreichen sucht, indem er in seinem Referat nach obigen Gesichtspunkten die Frage beantwortet: „Wie können unsere Gemeinden die hohe Aufgabe, die Gott unserer Synode gestellt hat, am besten ausführen?“ Beweisen nicht gewisse Tatsachen, daß dieser Unterricht noch nötig ist? B.

**Synodalbericht des Texas-Distrikts** der Missouri-Synode. 1925. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Preis: 40 Cts.

Das Referat Prof. G. Eifrigs über den sechsten Artikel der Konfordinformel: „Vom dritten Brauch des Gesetzes“ beweist wieder einmal, welch reichen Gewinn man davon hat, wenn man sich eingehend mit den Lehren des göttlichen Wortes beschäftigt. Obwohl die Lehren des Evangeliums viel wichtiger sind als die des Gesetzes, so beweist doch die Geschichte der Kirche, daß wir Christen auch mit obigem Stück der Lehre uns befassen sollen. B.

**Concordia Junior Bible.** King James Version. Self-pronouncing. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ .

This new edition of the Bible, printed in Great Britain, will, no doubt, find a very ready sale. The paper is not of the „clinging“ kind. The print is faultlessly clear. The illustrations, well done in colors, are not of the common type. The maps answer their purpose. The „Practical Helps,“ covering sixty-three pages, prepared by Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann, touch upon topics such as these: How to Study the Bible; A Brief Outline of Bible History; Summary of the Books of the Bible; Passages Proving the Chief Doctrines; Passages of Great Beauty and Comfort, *e. g.*, passages in general cases of sickness; etc. This Bible may be had at the following prices: Style K. C.: Blue silk cloth, round corners, blue edges, \$1.50; Style K. F.: Leatheroid divinity circuit, red under gold edges, round corners, \$2.10; Style K. D. C.: Genuine leather, morocco grain, flexible covers, round corners, red under gold edges, title stamped on back, divinity circuit, \$2.75. The reviewer was under the impression that his desk Bible was the most acceptable one of its size, but he finds that the *Concordia Junior Bible* surpasses it in more than one respect. B.

**The Pastor as Student and Literary Worker.** Lectures Delivered at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, by *Th. Graebner*. Second, Revised Edition. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, \$1.50.

The methodical man is better equipped to meet more exigencies than the man who plods on in his work along desultory lines. Professor Graebner's carefully prepared volume will convince the readers or writers of books or sermons that gleanings and gathering material for the day when it may most be needed will greatly enhance their efficiency. Our colleague addresses his students in these lectures and seeks to give them helpful advice; but we must admit that we were not a novice in the ministry when we perused, to our own profit, the first edition of his methodology. The „Sturm-und-Drang-Periode“ through which the pastor must pass from time to time will lose much of its frowning and scowling mien if he follows the sound advice and eminently practical suggestions offered in this book.—The second and revised edition, in its mechanical make-up, far surpasses the first. B.

**Tidings of Great Joy.** A Collection of Original and Selected Christmas Recitations. By *W. M. Czamanske*. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Price, 60 cts.

Santa Claus will surely be banished from all children's Christmas services if the truths expressed in these pieces of poetry, partly compiled and partly composed by Pastor Czamanske, will be the keynote of the celebration. On eighty-eight pages much material is offered for recitations of children of various ages. B.

**Souvenir Album of Concordia Publishing House.**

The story of the remarkable growth of our Synod's printery is vividly portrayed in this handsomely executed album. The faithful and efficient work done by the employees of the firm is once again exemplified in this memorable publication. We thank the ever-gracious God for the rich benefactions which He has bestowed upon our printing house, and we implore Him to fill all persons vitally interested in its existence and progress with the same unswerving spirit of loyalty to the monumental cause for which Concordia Publishing House stands. B.

**Alternative Views of the Bible.** By *John Bloore*. The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y. Price, \$1.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

It is refreshing to find a book of this nature among the many new religious publications. The author describes the methods of the negative critics in dealing with the Bible, especially the Old Testament, and then he shows the arbitrary and unjustified character of their procedure. While the discussion is somewhat fragmentary, nevertheless the reader will find many things for which he will be thankful. Dr. Fosdick's book *The Modern Use of the Bible* is analyzed, and its destructive nature is uncovered. The work testifies to the inspiration of the Scriptures and the vicarious atonement of our Lord Jesus. It ought to have a wide circulation.

The publishers express the wish that such of our readers as have read recent books published by their firm "speak their mind" about them frankly. Suggestions with respect to books that "ought to be written" will likewise be welcomed. Address the Editor of the Religious Department, The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y. A.

**Week-Day Sermons in King's Chapel.** By *Harold E. B. Speight*. Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y. Price, \$1.75.

The sermons offered in this volume were preached to week-day congregations in the noon hour in a church located on one of the busiest corners of Boston's business district. It is an enchanting picture which Dr. Speight, the minister of King's Chapel, draws of these services in the foreword. He says: "Daily the Paul Revere bell summons from offices, stores, and streets a company of worshipers who come for the inspiration they believe they may find in the quiet of the sanctuary, in the ministry of great music, in the act of faith which unites rich and poor and wise and ignorant in a common prayer, in the message spoken from the pulpit with the authority of sincerity and the power of sympathy, in the uplifted song of universal hope and praise." The eighteen sermons collected here were preached by visiting clergymen belonging to a number of denominations. As far as I can see, all bear the stamp of Modernism. If any man in our midst has to acquaint himself with the type of preaching which is in vogue in modernistic pulpits, this volume will be useful to him. The doctrines preached here are as far removed from those of the



New Testament as heaven is from earth. If Paul had preached such sermons, his message would hardly have been "unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness." Neither would it have been "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Many of these speakers come "with excellency of speech or of wisdom," but they do not determine with Paul that "they will not know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." A.

**Jesus of Nazareth.** His Times, His Life, and His Teaching. By *Joseph Klausner*, Jerusalem. Translated from the original Hebrew by *Herbert Danby*, of St. George's Cathedral, Jerusalem. Price, \$4.50.

While this book, treating of our divine Lord, was written by a Jew, one can say for it that it is not more shocking to our Christian sensibilities than many modern "Lives of Christ" emanating from so-called Christian sources. The author is continuing the work of Reimarus, Strauss, Renan, Holtzmann, Bousset, and company. If it were not for the wealth of references to Jewish literature, one might imagine that the book was written by a professor of Berlin or of Chicago University. Dr. Klausner endeavors to write about Jesus in an unbiased, objective manner. This means, from his point of view, that he rejects the deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the authenticity of many of His miracles, and the inspiration of the books of the New Testament; all of which shows that he is not using the sources with an unbiased mind, but has arrived at his main conclusions before he enters upon his investigations. The "perfect objectivity" of the modern scholar is simply a myth. The book, alas! portrays quite accurately the attitude of the present generation of critics with respect to the life of Jesus. We have real scholarship here, — much information is presented which helps us to understand the times of Jesus, — but our Lord is robbed of His glory. Quite instructive is the chapter entitled, "The Study of the Life of Jesus," in which the works of scholars treating the life of the Savior are described. To mention an interesting detail, the great work of Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus, the Messiah*, is both lauded and criticized, — lauded on account of the knowledge of its author of Jewish literature; criticized because, among other things, "it overlooks that the Talmud is not only a religious, but a legal code, that it is primarily a romantic and poetic book; and because it [the work of Edersheim] does not distinguish between the really ancient sources for pharisaic Judaism and those which are relatively late." Those who are making a specialty of New Testament study will do well to become acquainted with this work of Dr. Klausner, remembering the words of Horace: *Fas est, et ab hoste doceri*. A.

**The Problems of Adolescence and Youth.** And Their Treatment in Educational and Pastoral Work. By *Prof. Paul E. Kretzmann*, Ph. D., D. D. The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. Price, 75 cts. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

A very critical period in life — a period which, sad to say, is strewn with the wrecks of many hopeful boys and girls — is that of adolescence. The author of the above book, Dr. Kretzmann, discusses here, in his well-known style, the difficulties which beset our young people at this period, and furnishes wholesome advice how these difficulties may be overcome. He treats his subject with frankness, even in sections where sexual phenomena are surveyed, on which account it is desirable that the book be not handed to young people, but used by parents and educators exclusively. A.



## MISSION SECTION.

### What Should be Preached on Our Mission Fields, and How?

Published by request of the Conference of Home Mission Boards.

In His Great Commission the Lord Jesus gave to His apostles in outline the aim of missions and the plan which He wished to have followed. He also told them in His campaign order what agency they were to employ in carrying out His command. As friends, students, and promoters of missions we cannot ascribe too much importance to this last command of our Savior.

In bringing it before us as it appears in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we see that Christ tells His apostles that He wants them to disciple the nations of the earth and educate them as His followers by preaching to them the Gospel. The great missionary agency pointed out by the Lord of the Church in His Great Commission is preaching. So, also, the apostles understood the language of the Lord as may plainly be seen from their practise as described in Acts and in the various epistles. It was always on preaching that they laid the greatest stress, and to it they devoted most of their time. Pentecost Day plainly indicated the important part that preaching was to occupy in the work of extending the bounds of the Church. The very gift of tongues imparted to the apostles by the Holy Spirit could best find its expression by and in preaching, and the day had not passed before the apostles had put it to use in preaching, and as a result they gathered in no less than three thousand souls. That was only the beginning. "Every day in the Temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Jesus as the Christ). Acts 5, 42. Though one of the most eloquent preachers, Stephen, was stoned because of his witness-bearing and the others were persecuted, "they that were scattered abroad went about preaching the Word." Acts 8, 3f. Thus Philip, the fellow-deacon of the martyred Stephen, "went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them." Acts 8, 5. Peter and John "preached the Gospel in many villages of the Samaritans." Acts 8, 25. When Philip met with the eunuch of Ethiopia on the highway from Jerusalem to Gaza, he took as his text the passage from Isaiah which the eunuch had been reading and "preached unto him Jesus." Acts 8, 35. After leaving the happy, homeward-bound eunuch, Philip "was found at Azotus; and passing through, he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea." Acts 8, 40.

Paul, the greatest missionary, did the same thing the other apostles were doing. When he and Barnabas set out upon their great missionary journey from Antioch, they came to Salamis, on the island of Cyprus, and there they "preached the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews," Acts 13, 5; and the last glimpse the book of

Acts gives us of the apostle is in "his own hired house" at Rome, where he received all that came to him, "preaching the kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence." Acts 28, 31. Preaching the Gospel of Christ was Paul's one great task, from Damascus to Rome, from the time of his conversion till he laid his head on the executioner's block. To the Roman governor of Cyprus, to the superstitious Ephesians, to the boorish Lystrans, to the learned Athenians, to the cultured Corinthians, he preached the Gospel of Jesus. He may have changed his language to suit the taste and understanding of his hearers, but in the subject-matter itself he knew no deviation,—it was always the Gospel of Christ. Twice in his letters to Timothy he emphasizes the fact that he had been called to be a preacher, 1 Tim. 2, 7; 2 Tim. 1, 11. So he also tells the Corinthians that his main work was to preach the Gospel. 1 Cor. 1, 17. 1 Cor. 1, 18 he declares that the preaching of the Cross, though foolishness to the unbelievers, is the only means of salvation.

The apostles, however, were not only a unit in acknowledging the value of preaching as a missionary agency; it is also evident that they had very clear and decided convictions as to what preaching, the right kind of preaching, should be, and also as to the *how*, *when*, and *where* of preaching. For one thing, the apostles did not confine their preaching to one special day in the week nor to any particular hour of the day or night. Whenever they were given an opportunity to preach, they took advantage of that opportunity. When the angel delivered them from the common prison, where they had been put by order of the high priest, they entered the Temple early in the morning and taught. Acts 5, 21. Paul and Silas preached in the prison at Philippi at the midnight hour. Acts 16, 23. Then, too, the place of their preaching was not confined to the Temple or synagog, but a private house, the deck of a ship, the market-place, the amphitheater, the washing-place by the river, the prison-yard, the palace of a Roman governor, might serve the purpose. The style of address would vary according to the nature of the audience addressed, now rising to the highest level of eloquence and conforming to the most approved rules of rhetoric, at another time clothed in the simplest language and thought, to conform to the wants and capacity of the most uncultured. Also in their preaching the apostles were all things to all men, shaping their thoughts and words according as their audience might be an assembly of suspicious Jews, a gathering of reverent women, a number of supercilious philosophers, a household group, a single individual, a king, a Roman governor, a soldier, a master, or a slave.

As to the *what* of the apostles' preaching we are not left in doubt. Though it varied in form and style with the audience addressed and the direct object intended to be served, the contents of



the apostolic sermons and discourses were always the same, namely, the Gospel of Christ. The Savior had told them in His parting commands that they should bear witness of Him, that they should preach His Gospel, that they should proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name, and that they should teach their converts all things that He had commanded them. By their preaching, therefore, the apostles intended to attain a twofold purpose: to make disciples of Christ and to instruct and strengthen those who already were such. And if we compare Peter's sermon on the first day of Pentecost with his address in the house of Cornelius, Acts 2, 14—36; 10, 34—43, or Paul's address in the synagog of Antioch in Pisidia with that to the idolatrous people at Lystra or to the philosophers at Athens, Acts 13, 16—41; 14, 15—17; 17, 22—31, it will not be difficult for us to see how well these first Christian missionaries were able to adjust their thoughts and speech to the needs and capacities of their hearers. This adjustment of thought and language to the hearers' status as to culture and spiritual understanding by no means conflicts with Paul's determination as expressed to the Corinthians that he would know nothing among them but Christ Crucified. 1 Cor. 2, 2. For the heart of all Paul's preaching was Christ Crucified, and the warm blood from this heart penetrated to the farthest extremities of the body of Christian doctrine which Paul proclaimed. Paul knew that the humblest duty of Christian life, as every doctrine of the Christian religion, is rooted in the mighty facts of the Gospel, in God's eternal purpose, the gift of His Son, and in Christ's death, resurrection, and exaltation. Though there is a marked difference in what Paul preached when he first presented the Gospel to a people and what he proclaimed to them after he had gathered a church, he was always able to say that he preached Christ alone; for all he said centered about Christ. And so it was with all the Christian missionaries mentioned in Acts and in the epistles. With a clear eye they saw that there was but one remedy for the one disease. Whatever the symptoms might be, it was always the one disease, sin, and for that one disease they knew that there was only one remedy, the Gospel of Christ. The terrible fact they met with everywhere in human life was sin. In every city, in every person, in every life, they saw the trace of its slimy trail. Though others might belittle it, though others might wholly ignore it, they knew that it could not be put out of the way except by the blood of Christ, the spotless Lamb of God. They knew that the monarch on the throne and the beggar on the street needed the Gospel of Jesus; they knew that it suited the wants of the rich, glittering with gems and jewels, as well as the naked savage in all his squalor and filth. They knew that the Gospel alone could satisfy the spiritual wants of the learned and wise and that it could be understood by, and bring satisfaction to, the fools and babes.

First of all, the apostles preached a Gospel of facts. Wherever they went, they told this simple story: God looked down upon the race of men and saw their utter ruin. Out of love for them He sent His only-begotten Son in the fulness of time and in accordance with prophecies given through His prophets. This Son, Jesus Christ, was born of the Virgin Mary and for about thirty-three years lived a life of spotless holiness and of perfect obedience to His heavenly Father. He was true God, and He was true man. When the appointed hour had come that He should suffer and die for the sins of the world, He was betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, condemned by Pilate, crucified, died upon the cross, and was buried. Though He was the Lord of glory, He suffered unspeakable shame; He, the Prince of Life, gave up the ghost. But after three days He arose again from the dead and showed Himself to His disciples upon various occasions during a period of forty days, at the end of which he ascended to heaven; and now He sits at the right hand of His Father in glory, to come again on the Last Day to judge the quick and the dead. These are the facts that the apostles stated at greater or less length wherever they went. These facts they preached as the foundation upon which their faith was built, unhesitatingly, powerfully, convincingly; they omitted nothing, just as they added nothing.

Following upon these facts the apostles preached doctrines which flowed out of these facts. They preached man's total depravity and spiritual helplessness; they proclaimed the full atonement which Christ gained for all sinners; they would also with glowing tongues tell how God can be just and yet be the Justifier of the ungodly; everywhere they would cry out, "Look to the wounds of Jesus, and you shall be healed, and your sins shall be forgiven." Clear would be their tones on the doctrine of justification: "Come, ye naked, and be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus; come, ye transgressors, and God will fully pardon you; in Christ there is peace for all sinners, and no condemnation will there be for those who are in Christ Jesus." These great truths, sin and grace, atonement and justification, with all the other truths connected with them and which we need not now mention, were the Gospel which the apostles preached wherever they went. And these doctrines they practically applied to their hearers, ever insisting that, as the Gospel of Jesus was the only cure for all spiritual diseases, so it was the only tonic to give strength to the new life it awakened. Their hearers could never be in doubt that the apostles deemed the Gospel the battering-ram that alone is able to shake the foundation of all spiritual errors, and the sword that cuts through joint and narrow and makes him conqueror that wields it.

From what we have so far heard of the apostles' custom of preaching, it will not be a difficult thing for us to answer the question at the head of this paper, "What should be preached on our mission-fields, and how?"

### What Should be Preached on Our Mission-Fields?

Taking the apostles for our models, we should on our mission-fields in no uncertain tones bear witness to the fact that the writings of the prophets and apostles are an infallible spiritual authority and therefore should be the absolute foundation of our faith. We must not tire declaring to our hearers that the holy writers were not merely divinely impelled to write, that not only the thoughts they expressed were of divine inspiration, but that their very words were God-breathed. We must unfalteringly insist that the Scriptures are inerrant in all their statements, that they give a complete presentation of all necessary spiritual knowledge, and impart to man the ability to come into the proper relation to his God and to attain the eternal bliss of heaven. Our missionaries should never grow tired in declaring that the Scriptures are the means of the Holy Spirit's gracious advent and dwelling in the human heart, since by their power faith is kindled and man is enabled to walk in holiness and righteousness before God, to overcome evil, and in the face of all temptations to remain faithful to the end.

Then the doctrine of Christ's deity should be most clearly and strongly presented on our mission-fields. Comparatively brief reference to the being and attributes of God may be generally sufficient, since these are so clearly stated and so fully accepted by the people. Here and there a missionary may meet with a person who doubts and denies the existence of God, but as a rule the head is not so much to blame as the heart. It is very advisedly that the Holy Spirit says that the fool has said in his *heart* that there is no God, and again, "Out of the *heart* proceed evil thoughts," among them also now and then atheism. The deity of Christ is a doctrine with which the Church stands or falls. It is on the doctrine of Christ's deity, so Christ tells Peter, that the Church is built. It would probably be out of place to preach this doctrine controversially on our mission-fields, but the missionary should give it a prominent place in his sermons, assume it, and declare it as did the apostles.

The depravity of the human heart, the inherited inclination to do wrong, must likewise be stressed; for unless man is convinced that his heart is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," he will not feel the need of a Savior. But if he realizes the depravity inherent in his own very nature, he will also feel the need of a Savior from heaven who can create him anew. To man thus sunk in sin the doctrine is preached of an atoning Savior who died in his stead, who magnified the Law and made it honorable, who made it possible for God to forgive the sinner without surrender of His holiness and justice. These should be the cardinal themes of the missionary's sermons: a divine Savior making atonement for sinful man and restoring him to divine favor. On these doctrines and those flowing



out of them every missionary should gather such Scripture-proofs and arguments and illustrations as shall make the Gospel glad tidings to the sons and daughters of men to whom he has the privilege of preaching.

I wish also to lay stress upon the importance of teaching the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacraments. Through this influence alone all good begins in man. It is the Spirit who through the Gospel regenerates, justifies, and sanctifies us; without His gracious working there could be no hope and no life for us. The doctrines of the resurrection of the body, the immortality of the soul, heaven and hell, must also be distinctly set forth and given as much prominence as was done by the apostles.

Permit me to call attention to the fact that in the apostolic model sermons as we have them in the Book of Acts, doctrine greatly predominates. So Paul exhorts Timothy to take heed "unto the doctrine." The emphasizing of doctrine will prevent our hearers from turning to fables and foolish and unlearned questions. If there were more preaching of doctrine in the American Reformed pulpits, Modernism would not have made the inroads in those denominations it did.

The missionary, too, must be ready to grapple with the specious forms of error which he will find prevalent among the people; he must understand the arguments which are employed to sustain them and which captivate so many. The more thoroughly people find him posted in matters of interest to them, the greater will be his influence over them. Yet that interest will be of little value unless it helps him to lead and draw them to Christ. While it is perfectly proper and necessary that the missionary should take cognizance of error also in its modern garb, he should make it a point to show that, after all, it is only old error revamped. And while the missionary may with perfect propriety refer to passing events by way of example or illustration, he should beware of the pitfall of letting passing events draw him away from the treatment of the great subjects which he has been called to dwell upon.

Special mention may be made here of that modern plague, the lodge, which gives many a missionary not a few anxious hours when the question arises as to how best to witness against it. There seems to be no doubt that it would be unwise in the very beginning to treat the lodge evil in the public sermon at a new mission-place. Of course, so much is plain, lodge-members should not be tolerated in a Lutheran congregation, even if the congregation is new; but it is also certain that in our opposition to the lodge we must not cast wisdom to the winds. Remembering that the apostles and other early Christian preachers did much of their preaching in private, let us not forget that we may do the same, and such preaching to individuals seems just what is most effective when dealing with the lodge evil.

In dealing with the victim of the lodge privately we have the best opportunity to learn in what particular point the individual is lacking in spiritual knowledge, to point out to him how the arguments he puts up for the lodge are in opposition to the faith he purports to have in his heart and to remove those things which are obscuring his spiritual vision. Of course, sooner or later the time will come when, for the sake of the congregation at large, the missionary will have to make public confession of his and his Church's position and by means of a full and plain presentation to show that such a position is the only one that can claim to be Scriptural. We do not believe that veiled allusions to the lodge in sermons will do much good; on the contrary, we are of the opinion that when the time has come, after proper and full presentation of the Christian fundamentals and sufficient private dealing with the individual lodge victims in the congregation, an open, frank setting forth of the Biblical objections to the lodge is the only proper thing. And such a courageous testimony, given in God's name, will, by God's grace, not be in vain, but will redound to the spiritual strengthening of the congregation and prove a salutary preventive to many who were in danger of succumbing to the temptation of joining the lodge. Needless to say, when pastoral wisdom deems that the time has come to bear public witness against this insidious evil, the missionary should be especially faithful in the preparation of his sermon.

The missionary should be careful not to preach sanctification at the expense of justification, neither must he preach sanctification in such a way as to lead his hearers to think that a mere outward morality is all that is required. He will, indeed, teach morality, but he will present it as the outflow of a heart that has been changed and purified, and filled with love to God and man, by the working of the Holy Spirit through the Word. He will stress the point that a morality coming from the heart is like the healthy fruit produced by a tree whose every limb and twig is permeated with healthy sap.

Neither is the missionary to preach metaphysics and natural religion, politics and science, nor is he to preach himself; for all this would be a pollution and degradation of the pulpit. With Luther he should be able to say: "I myself know nothing of Luther and will know nothing of him. I preach nothing of him, but only Christ. The devil may take Luther — if he can! If I leave Christ in His place, it will be well with us too."

"What think ye of Christ?" "What must I do to be saved?" These great questions and their answers should be with the missionary, as they were with the apostles, the great themes with which he ought to occupy his time while in the pulpit.

We cannot too strongly stress the vital fact once more that the relation which the topics of preaching bear to one another is of the greatest importance. Before this we called attention to the

danger of stressing sanctification at the expense of justification, of looking for fruits where there is no plant, and of preaching a mere external morality, a morality not rooted in a regenerated heart. We would here take occasion to say that it is also wrong to go to the other extreme and preach in such a manner as if fruits were uncalled for and as if sanctification of life were a matter of indifference.

The Law of God, with all its solemn injunctions, must be distinctly set forth. The preacher must gather his people at the foot of Mount Sinai and let them see the lightnings come forth from the dark cloud covering its summit; he must make them hear the voice like thunder out of the cloud and let them know that it is the voice of the eternal and holy God. Through such preaching his people's consciences are to be awakened and their hearts to be caused to tremble. Some will, of course, object to the sternness of the Law and demand the prophesying of smooth things; some will say as did the people of Israel at Sinai, "Let not God speak to us any more." But for all this the Law must be proclaimed, since by it is the knowledge of sin and of the punishment that must follow. However, when the Law has brought the sinner to his knees, then the Gospel must not be withheld. The penitent sinner must be directed to the Savior, and be made to see that Jesus' blood will also cleanse him from all sin. Let us, by all means, speak sweetly of the love of God and the Savior's grace, for that is essential; but let the missionary never forget that the Law, too, has its important and necessary place. The Law, without the Gospel, is dark and hopeless; the Gospel, without the Law, is meaningless, inefficient, and powerless. The one leads to slavery and hypocrisy; the other, to lawlessness and ungodliness. Sin is sin, and no Gospel can change it into anything else; grace is grace, and no Law can change or belittle it in the least.

Before we leave this part of our subject, we should like to mention one more important thing: Our missionaries should take care to choose their subjects and topics somewhat more systematically. We have all learned to see and appreciate the importance of systematic teaching in the catechetical class; but what we have there learned we do not apply as frequently as we should in our pulpits. Sermon topics are chosen in a more or less desultory and haphazard way, without due consideration of what we have recently treated in our pulpit discourses. Sometimes years may pass before the people will hear a sermon on some particularly important subject. Most of us regularly use one or the other of the prescribed series of pericopes, and this is of some value in the methodical selection of sermon themes, but this does not wholly prevent us from leaving the choice of subjects in a measure to chance. Every preacher, and particularly every missionary, should, therefore, at the beginning of the year draw up a list of subjects on which it is necessary to preach at frequent intervals in order that his people may hear the whole counsel



of God within a reasonably limited period of time. We should suggest that at least once a year every preacher preach a sermon on themes such as these: Inspiration of the Scriptures, The Deity of Christ, The Humanity of Christ, Sin, Atonement, Justification, Regeneration, Good Works, Baptism, The Lord's Supper, The Person and Work of the Holy Ghost, Prayer, Judgment Day, The Resurrection of the Body, Heaven, Hell, etc. We may assume that people who have had a course of catechetical instruction have some conception of these great elementary truths, but we should not be too optimistic in this regard. Even in well-established congregations incidental allusions to these fundamental doctrines, their fragmentary illustration by texts which present them under a special aspect, the reference we make to them in order to enforce Christian duties, will often not have the effect that we suppose, because the people have not such a clear and definite conception of them as they should have, despite the fact that they have listened to the preaching of the Word of God for years. How much more, then, should these great fundamental truths receive full and frequent treatment at least once a year on our mission-fields! It is for this reason that we make bold to suggest that every missionary draw up a list of such important subjects on which he feels that he ought to preach at least once a year, that he refer to this list from time to time, and that, when he has preached upon one of these selected topics, he write the date against it as he checks it off.

### **How the Missionaries Should Preach on Our Mission-Fields.**

For one thing, our missionaries should preach sermons fitted for their audiences. While the missionary is preparing his sermon, he should never lose sight of his congregation. The questions ever before him should be: Will this help my people? Is this as plain as it should be? Am I putting it so that it will touch their consciences? Will it arouse, instruct, warn, admonish, comfort them? etc. In other words, a sermon should always be made to order, and it should never be of the "hand-me-down" kind if it is to do the most possible good. As the missionary composes his sermon, he should have in mind the sorrows and disappointments, the happiness and hopes, the struggles and failures, and the triumphs of his people. I, for one, think it would be most unreasonable to expect people to listen to me for a half hour or longer if I should not recognize the fact of their presence. It is a sure thing that, if a minister forgets his congregation as he prepares his sermon, he cannot expect to have a congregation to preach to for any length of time.

Then, too, a sermon should be made in the light of personal experience. Let a preacher search the depths of his own heart and study his own flesh and then let his hearers benefit from such research and study. Of course, this does not mean that his sermons shall be

detailed confessions of his own spiritual experiences as Augustine gives them in his *Confessions*; but we do mean that sermons shall impress the hearers with the fact that the preacher is not speaking of things that are strange to him. In a sense he should be able to say with John that what he declares to his hearers is what he has himself seen and heard and felt. When a preacher speaks of spiritual things, it must not be as when a blind man speaks of colors or a deaf man of sound. If he finds the means of arousing his own conscience, it will probably be the means of arousing the consciences of others; if he finds a certain passage or Biblical thought particularly comforting to himself, the same passage or thought will probably have the same effect on others. If he studies carefully the danger of temptation, how it approaches, how, under circumstances, it grows stronger or weaker, he will be able to use his experience in helping others to fight successfully against this danger. If he turns the eye of his mind inward and then lets his hearers profit by what he has seen, his sermons will be practical and helpful. Of course, in insisting that the preacher give his hearers the benefit of the study of his spiritual inner life, I do not wish to be understood as though the preacher should, as it were, betray himself to his hearers; what I do wish to say is that his knowledge of his own soul life is to make his sermons fresh, practical, and effectual.

Right here we may say that very often an admonition or warning will be doubly effectual if the preacher includes himself by the use of the personal and possessive pronouns *we*, *us*, and *our*, instead of *you* and *your*. He can thus get much nearer to his people and use much stronger and more forcible language without danger of giving offense or tempting the hearers to take an antagonistic attitude.

I cannot too strongly urge the missionary not to be niggardly with illustrations. If there is one weakness in many of our sermons, it is that we do not use enough illustrations. And yet it is just illustrations that hold the attention and help the hearer to retain in his memory the truths he has heard. If we would only study our Savior's practise in this respect, how different our sermons would be! Jesus' addresses are filled with illustrations taken from Scriptural and Jewish history, history with which His hearers were acquainted. Often His illustrations are drawn from nature: the germinating grain, the short-lived grass, the lily in its beauty, the tiny mustard-seed, the sheep so easily lost, the worthless sparrow, the rock and sand, the cunning fox, and the cruel wolf. Then, again, He turns to men in their employments and draws from them important lessons: the sower, the vine-dresser, the Temple-builder, the steward, the careless rich man, the young heir in his prodigality, the selfish rich man, the unjust judge. Women in their humble household duties, parents and their love, children in their waywardness, all must help the Lord to make plain the truths He wishes to impart. The range

of our Savior's illustrations is infinite; He ascends to heaven and descends to hell to find them. He searches eternity and travels through infinite space to find that which will help us to grasp His eternal verities.

Now, does not the inference suggest itself that we should do likewise? Since Jesus by His use of them sanctified the parable, the allegory, the metaphor, should we not follow His example, particularly in view of the fact that the apostles did so? And how much material can we not find all around us! Besides the Biblical illustrations which we have at hand, the literature we read, and the world all about us is full of illustrations that would be of great service in making plainer the great truths we are called to set before the people.

Our missionaries should not merely aim to explain the text, but to explain it for the people who have come to listen. The sermon is to do something. It is to do something immediately. Sermons are soon forgotten, for which reason they must do good at once, or they will usually do no good at all. He must preach so that the people feel the text is aimed at them, that it was inspired by God for them, that it is the Word of God to them. The purpose of the sermon is not to have people say of it that it was good, but its intention is to do good. When Urban preached the first crusade, he may have used beautiful language, but the people's only thought was that they must go to fight the Turk; his address at Clermont aroused his hearers to action and brought to their lips the cry, "God wills it!" So should our preaching not fill our hearers with admiration for the preacher, but increase our spiritual knowledge and arouse us to fight more earnestly against the devil, the world, and our own flesh. A story is told of a person who one day asked why it was that Demosthenes was regarded as a far greater orator than his rival Aeschines. The answer given was: "When we hear Aeschines speak, we all say, 'What a wonderful speaker is Aeschines; what beautiful language! What impressive gestures!' But when Demosthenes speaks, we all cry, 'Up, let us march against Philip!'" Every preacher should strive to be a Demosthenes.

Never let a missionary in the mission-field fear that he can be too simple and elementary in his explanations of a subject. Our people's knowledge of most things is not as clear as we might suppose and as a little informal examination will soon bring out. Even in our older congregations we often find that persons who have been taught the Bible histories and the Catechism in a good Christian day-school and have had a thorough preparation for confirmation, for all these advantages are only superficially acquainted with details of Biblical history and have only a vague idea of the doctrinal truths of the Bible. How much more, then, is that the case in the mission-fields! I am sure that the best and most successful preacher is



always he who takes for granted that his hearers know little about the subject on which he is speaking to them and for this reason will give his audience what might seem unnecessary information on the matter under consideration.

Then, too, missionaries need have no great misgivings about saying the same thing over too often. Preachers have an unnecessary fear of repetition. Finney, in speaking of the days when he was a lawyer, says of his practise as a pleader before juries: "I used to take it for granted, when I had before me a jury of respectable men, that I had to repeat over my main positions about as many times as there were persons in the jury box. I learned that, unless I did so, — illustrated and repeated and turned over the main points of the law and of the evidence, — I should lose my case." Finney, no doubt, was right. We all would be more effective preachers if, instead of trying to say many things in a sermon, we rather tried to say a few things in many ways.

By all means our missionaries in the field should use plain, simple language. However, the simplicity of the language does not require that it be crude or full of slangy and uncouth expressions. Vulgar, low, and trivial language is always out of place in the pulpit and utterly reprehensible when coming from the lips of one of God's ambassadors. The language of our Savior in His discourses is a model of simplicity and plainness and, withal, of beauty and strength.

High-sounding and technical expressions that are beyond the comprehension of a large proportion of the hearers should not be used by a conscientious pastor. Like Luther, the preacher should ignore Doctor Jonas and Pomeranus and speak to Jack and Jill. In new mission-places the missionary should even be careful in the use of theological terms. Outside of those of our hearers who may have been brought up in our Church and have received a systematic and thorough course in the Catechism, we have no right to expect such as come to hear us to know what justification, sanctification, regeneration, illumination, and such like terms mean. We do not mean to say that these terms should not be used at all, but the preacher should explain them as he uses them, and do this again and again.

Let the missionary also beware of exaggeration. Let him remember that if anywhere, it is in the pulpit that a sacred regard for the truth should obtain. Extravagance on the part of the preacher will soon impair his usefulness and destroy his influence. Earnest men and men with imagination are in danger of using superlatives where ordinary expressions would be more in place, and if they do not guard their tongue, they will find that the habit of exaggerating will enslave them before they are aware of the danger.

The preacher's language should be kind and sympathetic. Let it always be remembered that flies are caught with molasses. Underhand thrusts at people from the pulpit are cowardly on the part of the preacher. While he must show his hatred of sin, he should never fail to show that he loves the sinner. Let him ever remember that censuring people for being imperfect will generally not make them better. Scolding will seldom set persons on the way to sanctification. We know that faultfinding and carping has an evil effect on children, and the same is true with congregations. Perpetual faultfinding and condemning is often an indication of ill temper on the part of the preacher rather than of a hatred of sin. Telling people that they must become better will not make them better; for you cannot worry people into goodness. Many preachers take the Rev. Ryde in George Eliot's *Adam Bede* for their model; they are "like a dose of physic," and Mrs. Poyser says of him: "He gripped you and worreted you, and after all he left you much the same." But of another minister the same open-eyed observer said: "Mr. Irwine was like a good meal of victual; you were the better for him without thinking on it." Let preachers on the mission-fields and elsewhere beware of giving their hearers too much "physic"; it may be a good thing to give it at intervals, but too much of it produces nausea and ruins the health of any church. Not "physic," but "victuals," must be the regular fare of a congregation; it is the Bread and Water of Life that the people need. Instead of finding fault with the people for their want of zeal, try to stimulate it; instead of criticising their covetousness all the time, try to awaken their generosity. Never forget that to deplore the inconstancy, languor, and indifference of men will not make them zealous and reliable; you may by means of sharp words occasionally show God's disapproval of covetousness and other sins, but to make them liberal, zealous, and constant, you will have to preach sermons which will make them more conscious of God's love, the Savior's grace, and the Holy Spirit's constant influence through the means of grace.

Symmetry in the sermon should never be attained at the expense of usefulness, and it is by no means necessary that the parts of the sermon always be of equal length. A part that usually might be quite elaborate may under given circumstances be cut down to only a few sentences; and, again, a certain phase of a subject which under ordinary conditions might require only a passing notice may demand lengthy treatment for very practical reasons. Whenever such is the case, the missionary should not hesitate what to do, but remember that, first of all, he is called to bring God's message to his people, not to observe certain more or less conventional rules of public speaking, though he should not ignore these rules under ordinary circumstances, since they are based on sound principles and are the



outgrowth of years of experience. Just in passing we wish to state that much of the sermon should be delivered in *conversational style*, and that too many speakers tire their hearers by not observing this rule.

If the introduction is important, because its intention is to dispose the people toward accepting the message, the conclusion is equally as important, or even more so, since its purpose is to seal the Word that has been heard. We feel that because of the special aim of a sermon and because of its being an oral discourse, the close of a sermon should be particularly earnest and forceful. Time and care spent upon the peroration of a sermon will always be well spent. While we may not be able always so to choose our concluding words nor so effectively to utter them as to make our hearers leave the thought in their minds that they will never forget them, yet by God's help and faithful attention our conclusions may always be more than ordinarily impressive.

Emerson once said, "The virtue of orators is to be interesting." He was right, for what is, and what can be, more indispensable to a speaker than to be able to excite and sustain the interest of his hearers? When a preacher steps into the pulpit, he must determine to do all he can to get the people to listen to him; for if the people do not listen to a preacher, he might as well give up his preaching. Dulness is an unpardonable sin in a public speaker. The preacher who is not able to interest his audience is bound to be inefficient.

In the estimation of many, one sure way of proving an uninteresting and inefficient preacher is to read the sermon. There may be men who, like Chalmers, can read their discourses and still be powerful and effective orators, but their number is very, very small. Then, too, a preacher may not use his manuscript in the pulpit and still be very uninteresting and inefficient. But all things being equal, it is, no doubt, true, that German, Scotch, and French people have very good reasons to regard the manuscript with horror when it is brought into the pulpit and read there. This, of course, does not mean that there should be no manuscript at all; it only means that the sermon should be preached, not read, by the preacher in the pulpit.

In short, conscientious preparation, followed by a correct and forceful delivery, in the way of a clear articulation, a proper modulation of the voice, and a moderate, but effective use of gestures, will make the missionary an acceptable preacher in his field of labor. By God's grace he will be instrumental in leading many souls to righteousness, and his will be the reward which will be bestowed by a bountiful God upon all His faithful servants that lead men to righteousness.

Napoleon, O.

F. J. LANKENAU.